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OE. 'DRĒAM' AND ITS SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT

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IN spite of the admirable achievements of English lexicography a critical investigation of OE. texts will quickly reveal that even the best of our dictionaries often fail to bring out the finer shades of meaning of words which represent basic ideas of heroic life and thought.¹ Yet it would be unfair to blame lexicographers for a failure that is inherent in the very nature of their work, since their task is too comprehensive for a minute study of meaning. But there are other even more serious drawbacks. The contextual sphere of words can never be adequately reproduced in dictionaries for reasons of space; even the *O.E.D.* is no exception to the rule. There is, moreover, the mechanical arrangement of words in alphabetical order which tends to obscure the interrelation of synonymous expressions.

On the other hand, it is not the business of semantic research to compile dictionaries. If this sounds commonplace it should be remembered that a clear delimitation of these two branches of linguistic work, which are

¹ Cf. Grein-Köhler, *Der Sprachschatz der angelsächsischen Dichter* (Heidelberg, 1912), sb. *gylp*, *gilp*, which is interpreted as *gloria*, *vana gloria*, *gloriatio*, *ostentatio*, *magmiloquentia*, *arrogantia*. A complete collection of instances occurring in OE. poetry is added, each instance being quoted in its proper context. Such a collection is indispensable for purposes of reference, but it fails to illustrate sufficiently the underlying idea of the word in heroic poetry. A mere string of Latin equivalents barely touches the fringe of it, and the reader is uncertain which of the different meanings is relevant to the single instance adduced. It was obvious even to the compilers of this dictionary that none of the meanings given would fit a line such as *Beow. 828/9 hæfde East-Denum Gēatmeca lēod gilp gelēsted*; so they added *promissum* in brackets. Yet only a combined study of *gylp* and the correlated *bēot* will disclose the subtler aspects of this important term. In *Beowulf* both words denote the boasting speech of the warrior before he sets out to fight, revealing pride as a primary source of heroic action; in the Christian epics (*Genesis*, *Exodus*) the word has lost its heroic glamour and degenerated into 'overbearing arrogance'. Originally the two words were never confused; *bēot* was only used with reference to a friend, *gylp* was meant to defy the enemy (cf. L. L. Schücking, *Heldenzug und Würde im Angelsächsischen, Abhandlungen der phil.-hist. Klasse der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. 42, v, 1933). Such examples could easily be multiplied. They show that a thorough semantic investigation of OE. (and ME.) vocabulary is a task that has as yet hardly been attempted.

closely related and therefore apt to be confused, is essential for the promotion of the study of vocabulary. It is necessary to set out with this distinction in mind in order to avoid the pitfalls which even the best dictionary cannot wholly escape. It is unfortunate that lexicographers are so often compelled to do the semantic part of the work themselves, because nobody has sifted the material before them. Strictly speaking, they ought to reap the fruits of that other branch of philological research, and classify and arrange them in convenient order for the purposes of reference. This is the ideal case, of course. But even if we fall short of putting this into practice on a larger scale it should be made part of a working hypothesis in which the necessity of proper semantic methods is taken into account.

Ever since the study of meanings has been given the attention it deserves, a variety of methodical expedients has been put forward for this baffling and elusive part of linguistic work. It is not my intention to discuss in this paper their suitability, but rather to test a method that was recently used with much success in OHG. and MHG.¹ and to offer a new explanation for the shift of meaning from OE. *drēam* to its entirely different sense in modern Engl. *dream*.

The semantic offshoot of Germ. **draum-a* in OE. differs considerably from its equivalents in the other Germanic dialects. Not a single instance of the sense 'somnia' has so far been discovered; it always appears to express 'noise, bliss, rejoicing' or a meaning closely connected with this group, in poetry as well as prose. On the other hand, while the sense 'somnia' alone appears in ON. *draumr* and OHG. *troum*,² there are

¹ Cf. J. Trier, *Der deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes: Die Geschichte eines sprachlichen Feldes* (Heidelberg, 1931); *Sprachliche Felder, Deutsche Volkserziehung*, vol. 4 (Frankfurt a. Main, 1939); my review of M. Bertschinger's *To Want: An Essay in Semantics, Schweizer Anglistische Arbeiten* (Bern, 1941), in *Engl. Studien* (1942), 218-20.

² The following is a complete collection of OHG. instances (*troum*, *troumen*, *untroum*, *troumsceide*, *sceidere-sceith*) and of all ON. instances occurring in the Eddic poems (*draumr*, *dreyrna*, *draumnigrun*, *draumþing*). I am indebted to Frau Dr. Karg-Gasterstädt for referring me to the OHG. material.

Glosses (Die althochdeutschen Glossen, ed. E. von Steinmeyer and E. Sievers, Berlin, 1879 foll.), vol. ii. p. 487, l. 7; 693. 3; 747. 45; iii. 259. 19; v. 17. 23.

Die kleineren althochdeutschen Sprachdenkmäler (ed. E. von Steinmeyer, Berlin, 1916), p. 147, l. 16.

Tatian (ed. E. Sievers, 2nd ed., Paderborn, 1892), ch. 5, v. 8; 8. 8; 9. 1; 11. 1, 4.

Otfrid (Otfrids Evangelienbuch, ed. O. Erdmann, Halle, 1882), i. 8. 20; 17. 74; 21. 4; ad Hartm., l. 83.

Notker (Die Schriften Notkers und seiner Schule, ed. P. Piper, Freiburg and Tübingen, 1882 foll.):

Boetius (Piper, vol. i), p. 61, ll. 16, 17; 127. 10; 140. 2; 335. 19.

Martianus Capella (Piper, vol. i), p. 698, l. 13; 817. 17.

Notker's Psalms (acc. to the Vienna MS., ed. R. Heinzel and W. Scherer, Strassburg, 1876), Psalms 104, vv. 19, 20, 22.

Notker's Psalms (acc. to the St. Gallen MS., ed. Piper, vol. ii), Psalms 104, vv. 19, 20, 22 (glosses).

instances of both meanings in OS., which thus shows a greater affinity to OE. usage than the former two dialects.

Examples of OS. *drōm*, *drōmian* occur only in the *Heliand*; no instances were found in the *Genesis Fragment* and in E. Wadstein, *Kleinere altsächsische Sprachdenkmäler* (Leipzig, 1899). Quotations are from O. Behaghel, *Heliand und Genesis* (4th ed., Halle, 1922). Numbers after meanings quoted below refer to Sehart's classification.¹

drōm 'somnia' (state of happiness and animation in sleep, dream, 3): 316 *that im thar an drōma quam drohtines engil*; 679-81 *thar im godes engil slāpandiu an naht suueban gitōge, gidrog an drōme*; 710-11 *thō fon them drōma ansprang lōseph an is gestseli*.

The rest of the instances found in *Heliand* belongs to the group of meanings found in OE. It should be noted that from the point of view of vocabulary there is a stronger affinity between OE. and OS. than between OE. and any other Germanic dialect, with the possible exception of the OHG. *Tatian*, which also shows remarkable traces of OE. influence absent in other contemporary OHG. works. There can be no doubt that the work of Anglo-Saxon missionaries on the Continent must have largely contributed towards shaping the language of the people they converted, though many a likeness, morphological or semantic, may be due to ethnological conditions at a time when the Anglo-Saxon tribes were still settlers among continental Germanic peoples during the migration period.²

drōm 'life on this earth, activities of man' (1): 1125-6 *sōhte im eft erlo gemang, mārī meginthiōde endi manno drōm*; 3389-90 *that he Lazarus an liudio drōm selbon sandi*; 3576-7 *that sie liudio drōm, suikle sunnun scīn gisehen mōstin*.

drōm 'happy and joyful earthly activities and life, in particular the boisterous mirth of drinking and feasting men' (3a): 2005-12 *uuerod blīōde, uuārun thar an luston liudi atsamne, gumon gladmōdie. gengun ambahtman, skenkeon mid scālun, drōgun skīrienne uuīn mid orcun endi mid alofatun; uuas thar erlo drōm fagar an flettea, thō thar folc undar im an them benkeon sō bezt blīōsea afhōbun, uuārun thar an unneun* (cf. *Beow.* 88, 497, 2016).

In connexion with *farlātan*, *ageban* (i.e. to die) (3b): 578 *forlāten liudio drōm*, *Eddic Lays* (G. Neckel, *Edda, Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, Heidelberg, 1936):

Alt. 30. 6; *Helg. Higrv.* 19. 2; *Helg. Hund.* ii, 50. 10; *Guðr.* ii, 39. 2; *Atlam.* 10. 3; 20. 4, 6; *Baldrs Draumar*, 1. 8; *Hyndl.* 7. 2.

Eddica Minora (ed. A. Heusler and W. Ranisch, Dortmund, 1903):

Innsteinlied, 7. 1, 8; 9. 1, 8; 11. 1, 8; 12. 7; *Ūtsteins Kampfstrophen (Hālfssaga)*, 3. 5; 9. 1, 6; *Lausavísur*, J 8. 6.

¹ E. H. Sehart, *Vollständiges Wörterbuch zum Heliand und zur altsächsischen Genesis, Hesperia Nr. 14* (Göttingen, 1925). This dictionary, which is indispensable for students of OS., cannot be praised too highly for the range and accuracy of its scholarship. In a few minor points I have added to or slightly modified the meanings given by Sehart.

² Cf. E. Gutmacher, *Der Wortschatz des althochdeutschen Tatian in seinem Verhältnis zum Altsächsischen, Angelsächsischen und Altfriesischen*, Paul und Braunes Beiträge, xxxix (1914), 277-81.

sôkien liht ôðar; 762-3 *that he forlêt eldeo barn, môdag manno drôm*; 3349-50 *that he manno drôm ageþen scolde*.

drôm 'heavenly activities, joy, mirth, bliss in heaven' (2): 1788-90 *sô scal is gæld niman, suuðo langsam lôn endi lif êuwig, diurlican drôm*; similarly 2797 *diurlican drôm*; 2083-4 *thar is seolono liht, drôm drohtines endi dagskîmon* (cf. *Seaf. 65, Dream of the Rood 144*).

drôm 'activities and life in hell' (3a): 945-6 *than gi helligithuwig, forlâtad lêðaro drôm endi sôhead eu liht godes*.

According to Grein-Köhler (p. 125) the sense 'somnia' is unrecorded in OE. as well as in OS. The latter part of this statement is not borne out by an investigation of the sources. It is clear from the above collection that there are three unmistakable instances of this meaning in the *Heliand* (sb. 3). Yet there can be no doubt that this sense is entirely absent from all instances of the word that have been found in OE. poetry and prose. Obviously the OE. offshoot of the root-word must have come to express the rejoicing, bliss, and elevated mood that characterized the *duguð* and *geogoð* at the banquet and subsequently took on a strongly Christian colouring, at a very early stage of its development. It must soon have risen to a central position in Anglo-Saxon life and thought, as is proved by a wealth of instances and exemplified by at least four clearly definable senses and a greater number of subtle semantic ramifications and shades.

The OE. material, accessible in Grein-Köhler and Bosworth-Toller (cf. particularly the Supplement to the latter work, published in 1921) is too large to be reproduced here. A thorough investigation of the more prominent senses and their interrelations is a task that has still to be undertaken, but it is outside the scope of this paper. I shall content myself by giving a number of typical examples as they occur in OE. poetry. As for OE. prose, even a desultory examination shows that the majority of instances is deeply infused with the spirit of Christianity, which is quite in accordance with the general character of this form of literary expression in Anglo-Saxon times. The meanings given below are from Grein-Köhler with occasional minor modifications by myself. Figures after the senses refer to the classification of this dictionary.

drēam 'modulatio, canor, concentus, symphonia' (1) *Dan.* (ed. A. Blackburn, Boston, 1907) 255-9 *blīðe wæron eorlas ebrēa, ofestum heredon drihten on drēame, dýden swā hie cūðon ofne on innan aldre genereðe* ['they praised the Lord by singing together, in chorus' seems a better translation than Blackburn's rather careless rendering 'joy, pleasure, happiness']; *Phoen.* (ed. J. W. Bright, *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, London, 1895, repr. 4th ed. 1923, pp. 165-88) 134-9 *ne magon þām breathme býman nē hornas, nē hearpan hlyn, nē hæleða stefn ænges on eorðan, nē organon swēg, ne hlēoðres gewīns, nē swanes feðre, ne ænig þāra drēama þē Dryhten gescōp gumum tō glīwe in þās gēomran woruld!* [Bright translates 'harmony', but I am rather inclined to agree with Grein-Köhler who render *drēam*

here by 'different kinds of music'; for *swanes feðre* cf. *Riddle 7*, W. S. Mackie, *Exeter Book*, ii, London, 1934, p. 97, 6-7: my garments loudly sound and make melody—i.e. the garments of the wild swan.]

drĒam 'chorus' (2) (tentatively suggested by Grein-Köhler): cf. above, *Dan.* 255-9; *Hymns* 9, 36 (quoted from Grein-Köhler) *ealle þē heriað hālige drĒamas clænre stefne*.

drĒam 'jubilum, laetitia, joyful and happy activities and life, and then more generally of worldly joys' (3): this sense, as well as (4), is well instanced: *Exod.* (ed. Blackburn, Boston, 1907) 532 *lāne drĒam* 'transitory, fleeting joys'; *Wand.* 78-9 *waldend licgað drĒame bidrorene*, and similarly *Beow.* 1275; *Seaf.* 86 *gedroren is þeos duguð eal, drĒamas sind gewitene*; similarly *Dream of the Rood* (ed. B. Dickinson and A. C. Ross, London, 1934) 133; *Gen. A* (ed. F. Holthausen, Heidelberg, 1914) 40 *drĒama lēas*, and similarly 108; *Dan.* 30, 115 *eorðan drĒamas*. [Under this heading are also listed *Beow.* 88, 497, 850, 1275, but Grein-Köhler fail to point out that the word has in *Beow.* 88 and 497 a more specialized meaning and refers to the noise in the banquet hall. I strongly suspect that we here get a glimpse of the earliest sense of *drĒam* in OE. which presumably referred in pre-Christian times to the noise of drunken warriors, before it took on its later and more refined sense. It was to turn up again in ME.; cf. *Lag.* 1823, 11575, 22885, 23945. OE. compounds like *sele-drĒam* and *medu-drĒam* may be further indications. Cf. also above, *Heliand* 2005-12.]

drĒam 'heavenly joys', but perhaps more definitely referring to the 'bliss and singing of heavenly choirs' (4): *Jud.* (ed. H. Sweet, *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, Oxford, 1894, p. 150) 350 *swegles drĒamas*; *Dream of the Rood* 142-4 *þær ic syððan mōt winian on wuldre, well mid þām hālgum drĒames brūcan*; *Phoen.* 560 *drĒamas mid Dryhten*; *Gen. A* 56-8 *ond drĒame benam his fēond friðo ond gefēan ealle, torhte fire*.

The semantic range represented by OE. *drĒam* clings to the word long after the powerful influence of French ideas had ousted considerable parts of OE. poetic diction after the Norman Conquest. Cf. the early ME. *Bestiary* (ed. W. Morris, *E.E.T.S.* 49, 1872), 664-5 *ðanne remen he alle a rem, so hornes blast oðer belles drem* (of the elephants' loud trumpet-blast); *Owl and Nightingale* (ed. J. W. H. Atkins, Cambridge, 1922, composed presumably in the reign of King John, 1199-1217), 313-14, where the Owl remarks *ich singe efne, mid fulle dreme and lude stefne*, i.e. with full, sounding melody and a loud voice. The last instance adduced by *O.E.D.* is from a fourteenth-century courtly romance (*Floris and Blancheflour*, 37, c. 1330): *the leuedi . . . seide here louerd with still dreme, Sire* (&c.), where the word seems to mean 'voice'.

The meaning 'somnia' in modern Engl. *dream* goes back to the thirteenth century. In view of the fact that the idea of 'somnia' had been expressed by *swefn*¹ in OE., a word which showed no signs of slackening

¹ This is a very old word and appears in all Germ. dialects, in prose as well as in poetry, but the meaning oscillates between 'sleep' and 'dream'.

vitality down to the days of Gower and Chaucer, it is rather strange that ME. *drem*, *dreme* should with unexpected suddenness adopt the same signification, which was never attached to the word in OE. The earliest instances appear in an East Midland text (*Genesis and Exodus*, about 1250; see below). Most scholars are agreed that this word must be the direct descendant of OE. *drēam*, to which it corresponds according to the laws of sound-change; but the semantic development from Germ. **draum-a* down to modern Engl. *dream* has baffled most lexicographers so far, and no satisfactory explanation has as yet been offered.¹

As far as I am aware only one attempt was made to tackle the problem by a thorough investigation of the ME. sources. This was undertaken by E. C. Ehrensperger.² The conclusion arrived at is certainly new and rather ingenious in the way in which the two salient problems in the history of the word are linked up. According to Ehrensperger the original Germ. word for 'somnia' was *swefn*, *swefn*, &c., whereas **draum-a* primarily meant 'bliss, joy, noise, sound', &c. The semantic ambiguity of the former word, which could mean either 'sleep' or 'dream', caused a shift of meaning: there must have been a definite need for a word expressing the idea of 'somnia' alone. That is why this meaning attached itself to the latter expression. No instances of 'joy, bliss', &c., being preserved in OHG. and ON., the sense-change must have taken place in pre-literary times in these dialects. The language of the *Heliand* poet shows that this process was operative in OS. in the ninth century. English was the last to adopt the new signification; it was not before the thirteenth century that the new meaning in *drem*, *dreme* carried the day. This would account for the prolonged lingering of *swefn* in ME. which successfully refused to be replaced by its new competitor and only gradually fell into disuse.

As for the psychological basis of the shift, Ehrensperger refers to the expression *swefnes wōma*, *El.* 71, *Dan.* 110, 118, which he would translate as 'noise or sound of a dream'. He assumes that this may have gradually come to mean 'disturbance, noise, sound in sleep'. If that was the case, the word *drēam* 'ecstasy, frenzy' could of course easily be confused with

¹ Two events in the history of the word require explanation: (a) the origin of the OE. senses, (b) the reappearance of the meaning 'somnia' in early ME. As to (a) our etymological dictionaries hardly go beyond the stage of mere speculation. Some assume different root-words with differing significations, others try to link up in various ways the OE. and OS. with the respective ON. and OHG. meanings. The origin of modern Engl. *dream* is explained by Emerson, *History of the English Language* (New York and London, 1894), p. 154 and by O. Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language* (2nd ed., Leipzig, 1912), p. 69 as a Scandinavian sense-loan in early ME. For a different and more recent explanation see below.

² E. C. Ehrensperger, 'Dream Words in Old and Middle English', *P.M.L.A.* xlv (1931), 80-9. This paper is of great statistical value. Figures are given for all OE. and ME. dream-words (*swefn*, *swefnian*, *gesihð*, *meten*, *dreme*, *dremen*) in the various centuries in chronological order and their relationship is discussed.

swefn. They eventually became synonyms, a stage in their history that was reached in written English as late as c. 1250, in the spoken language presumably much earlier.

There are two weak points in this theory. In the first place it is not at all clear what OE. *wōma* really means.¹ Secondly, there is no evidence whatever for the pre-literary shift as assumed by Ehrensperger in ON. and OHG. The descendants of Germ. **draum-a* preponderantly show the meaning 'somnia', in the modern languages as well as in the old Germ. dialects. Even if this state of affairs is taken at its face value alone, it is difficult to see how anything but 'somnia' can have formed the semantic nucleus of the root-word. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the new meanings emerging in OE. must have been part of its original semantic range or contextual sphere. How this part came to assume a central position to the point of entirely obscuring the primary signification of the word in OE. is a problem that cannot be solved by a study of dream-words alone. It would also require a comprehensive investigation of the large number of synonymous expressions for OE. *drēam* in OE. as well as in the other Germ. dialects.

If it is taken for granted that 'somnia' represented the primary meaning of the word and that, as has never been doubted, ME. *dreme*, *drem* is the direct descendant of OE. *drēam*, we are forced to conclude that the older sense led a subterranean existence in OE. until its re-emergence in early ME., unless we are to fall back on the theory of a ME. sense-loan from ON. It must not be forgotten that the word *drēam* came to express highly important functions in Anglo-Saxon times. It became a standard term in OE. poetry which conjures up the peculiar atmosphere that characterizes the relationship of war-lord and retainers and the ethical code of life in the *dryht*, the community of warriors in an age of restless fighting, undaunted courage, bold migrations, and reckless conquests and delight in the joys of vigorous living. It is a hopeless task to grasp the complete range of this word or to analyse its manifold aspects by trying to explain it etymologically. No other OE. word is so distinctly expressive of the vitality and energy of the Germanic warrior, inspiring him to deeds of valour and fame, but also driving him to wear himself out in the noise and reckless mirth of the banquet.² There is nothing commonplace about this word; even before it was diffused with the spirit of Christianity and accordingly modified in sense it was a noble term, fit for usage of that

¹ Cf. L. L. Schücking, *Untersuchungen zur Bedeutungslehre der angelsächsischen Dichtersprache* (Heidelberg, 1915), pp. 91-8; H. Marquardt, *Die altenglischen Kenningar* (Halle, 1938), pp. 181, 201. Both discussions of the word show that the meaning is extremely vague and difficult to grasp.

² Cf. M. Deutschbein, *Germanisches Heldentum in der angelsächsischen Zeit* (Marburg, 1942), p. 54.

warrior aristocracy in whose speech it played so important a part. Was this perhaps the reason that the word was divested of its older prosaic signification? If the old meaning was exiled from the courtly hall, it may have taken refuge in the speech of the unlettered peasant.

So far the continued subterranean existence of the sense 'somnia' in OE. *drēam* is a mere assumption. It is unfortunate that hardly anything savouring of actual colloquial speech has come down to us from Anglo-Saxon times. But that it must have existed cannot reasonably be doubted. OE. literary tradition is, after all, only fragmentary, although it would be futile to guess how many treasures may have disappeared in the succeeding centuries. A great number of words, in particular those serving to express the higher aspects of mind and soul, are covered with a Christian veneer, and we seldom get a chance to penetrate to their original heathen signification. The powerful influence of the Church must have suppressed and eliminated elements in the speech of the converted Anglo-Saxons which were objectionable to Christian habits and usage, just as it made itself felt in the case of other survivals of the heathen past that lingered on under the surface far into Christian times.¹ Yet in spite of all this there may be traces in certain OE. literary works indicative of clandestine colloquial usage that have as yet escaped attention.²

It was not before the Norman Conquest and its far-reaching consequences had initiated the ME. period that colloquial speech of different kind and popular expressions had a chance to find access into works of literature, and they certainly made use of it. The wealth of dialect forms in early ME. is equalled by a vocabulary that reflects again and again rustic, unpolished, and popular usage; *Lazamon's Brut*, *Havelok*, and other texts are a copious source. It is as if the language had at last got rid of the fetters

¹ Alcuin's famous testimony in his letter to a bishop of Lindisfarne about the existence of Ingeld lays among the monks of that monastery (*Quid Hinielcus cum Christo?*) is a case in point. Cf. R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf, An Introduction to the Study of the Poem*, &c., 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1932), p. 22.

² The term 'Colloquial Old English' was coined by F. P. Magoun, *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, xix (1937), 167-73, but only in regard to phonological features. A small tentative collection of OE. 'colloquialisms' (usage of words) was made by F. Klaeber, *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, clxxxiii (1943), 89 n., where a few further bibliographical references may be found. Klaeber quite rightly takes his examples from prose texts, but presumably even certain poetic works such as the *Riddles* would repay study. An expression like *hæmedlæc*, 'sexual intercourse', used of cock and hen, in *Riddle* 42. 3 is not recorded elsewhere in poetry, and the runic *higora*, 'jay, magpie', in *Riddle* 24 is likewise unknown in poetical texts, although it occurs frequently in glosses, which show that the name of the bird was also used as a name for a low kind of jester; cf. Grein-Köhler, sb. *higora*, and F. Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, 1934, sb. *Häher*. It should also be noted that *Riddles* 44, 45, 52, 61, 62, 63 obviously contain only thinly veiled obscenities. In view of this fact such words as *nearo*, *earc*, *stician*, *fyllan*, *wagian*, and others, which occur in the above-mentioned riddles, are definitely suspect; certain unsavoury elements in their semantic range must have determined their choice in contexts of this kind.

which had been imposed so long on its free and unrestrained growth by the stern ways of the Church. It follows that ME. texts reflect a somewhat distorted picture of the life in Anglo-Saxon times such as cannot be reconstructed from the literary documents of the OE. period alone. Any attempt to discover colloquialisms in OE. speech should therefore take these facts into consideration.

It may be objected that such suggestions must remain vague and uncertain, unless they are corroborated by proper linguistic evidence. No such evidence has so far been produced in the case of OE. *drĒam* and its subsequent development. I believe that this is partly due to inadequate methods. The following attempt at a new interpretation of the facts reviewed above is based on a kind of approach hitherto barely tested in English semantic research.¹

It has long been recognized that the destiny of words is determined not only by the development of their intellectual content, but also by associations of different kinds. It would be a hopeless task to classify them according to logical or genetic principles, because each word is capable of evoking any number of associations in different contexts.² Yet if we fail to pay sufficient attention to the associative qualities of a word we cannot hope to discover the full extent of its history. These qualities will to some extent appear if the more prominent features of synonymous expressions are traced. It has rightly been said that many changes of signification are due to the wealth of synonyms a language possesses.³ Synonyms are often only distinguished by associative attributes; but it frequently happens that they develop, in the course of their history, a clear difference in their respective intellectual content.

It follows that we must proceed from the single word to the group and study from the very start the fate of synonymous expressions together with our principal word. If it can be shown that the whole group of synonyms centred round OE. *drĒam* radically changed its structure at the end of Anglo-Saxon times, we should get strong corroborative evidence for the theory advanced above.

Such a study might well add to our knowledge of the final decay and transformation of OE. poetic diction, if it was undertaken on a sufficiently large scale. It would have to comprise such words as *breahtm*, *hlēoðor*, *swēg*, *geswīns* and *swīnsian*, *glīw*, *hrĒam*, *blāð*, *ēad*, *bliss* and *blissian*, *sāel* and

¹ Cf., however, R. Woesler, *Das Bild des Menschen in der englischen Sprache der älteren Zeit*, *Neuphilologische Monatsschrift*, vii (1936).

² The importance of association as distinct from intellectual content was rather disregarded in earlier investigations of meaning, but was thrown into full relief by Wundt's psychological researches into the nature of language. Associations are normally divided into *adherent meaning* and *emotional connotations*. Cf. H. Schreuder, *Pejorative Sense-Development in English* (Groningen, 1929), p. 27.

³ Cf. H. Schreuder, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

gesælig, *wæstm*, *duguð*, and many others. No such ambitious attempt will be made in this paper; but I shall try to demonstrate below that even the investigation of a few words semantically connected with *drēam* is apt to confirm the method proposed here and likely to yield unexpected results.

If the central position of *drēam* and its far-reaching influence on the life and thought of Anglo-Saxon times is admitted, our next step must be to find out if there were similarly stimulating and comprehensive ideas that moulded and determined the ethics of that warrior-aristocracy whose noble form of literary expression is represented by our OE. heroic poetry. Then it would have to be shown that these ideas contain associations which link them up with the intellectual content as well as with the adherent meaning and emotional connotations of *drēam*—an assumption that possesses intrinsically a certain likelihood; and finally we should have to examine the combined history of these ideas, or rather the principal words that represent them, and in particular focus our attention on that period in which OE. *drēam* reveals with such unexpected suddenness a sense entirely absent from it in OE. literary tradition.

A word which equalled *drēam* in importance and likewise acquired a number of distinctly representative meanings in Anglo-Saxon times is OE. *spēd*. Its frequency surpasses even that of the former expression, in poetry and prose alike. According to Bosworth-Toller six separate groups of significations must be distinguished: I. *speed*, *quickness* (rare; only in the stereotyped adverbial phrase *spēdum* 'speedily, quickly'); II. *success*, *prosperous issue* (rather better instanced); III. *means*, *substance*, *abundance*, *wealth* (very frequent); IV. *power*, *faculty* (less frequent); V. *opportunity*, or *means of doing anything* (rare); VI. *progeny* (doubtful; only one instance recorded). It appears that the most conspicuous sense was III, as is attested by its great frequency. It is a dominating element already in the earliest glosses.¹

Numerous compound-formations illustrate the remarkable vitality of this term; cf. *æht-*, *feoh-*, *frēond-*, *freoðo-*, *here-*, *land-*, *mægen-*, *sige-*, *sigor-*, *tuddor-*, *un-*, *wan-*, *wig-*, *woruld-*, *wundor-spēd*. Yet as in the case of *drēam* the dictionaries fail to bring out the striking power and suggestiveness of the underlying idea. An admirable attempt to grasp its full richness and to throw light on its manifold semantic ramifications was made by Grönbech.² There was the *here-spēd*, *wig-spēd* required and desired in

¹ Cf. H. Sweet, *Oldest English Texts* (London, 1885), *Vespasian Psalter* 38. 6, 8, 68. 3, 88. 48, 108. 11, 138. 15, where *spœd(e)*, *spode* and *sped* always renders Lat. *substantia(m)*. Other Latin expressions are glossed by the word in the *Epinal* and *Corpus Glossaries*; cf. *Ep.* 815 *proventus* (*Corp.* 1663 *praeventus*) *spœd*; *Ep.* 940 (*Corp.* 1951) *successus*: *spœd*; *Corp.* 1648 *praesidium*: *spœd*.

² W. Grönbech, *Kultur und Religion der Germanen*, 4th ed. (Hamburg Copyright, 1937-42), pp. 315-16.

battle (*Beow.* 64, 697); it must have been a faculty that enabled men to be courageous, successful, and wise; Tubal-Cain was a skilful smith because he possessed *snýtro spēd* (*Gen. A.* 467), and when those who thought they might challenge the Lord in utter recklessness began to build the tower of Babel, they lost the power of speech, their *spæce spēd* (*Gen. A.* 1070). God punished them by his *mihta spēd* (*Gen. A.* 1080), for he is the powerful ruler and almighty Lord, an idea which the Genesis poet tersely paraphrases by *mægna spēd* (*Gen. A.* 3). There is a creative force and irresistible strength about this word. It represents faculties ranging from the highest skill in the most heterogeneous occupations (when the *scop* began to perform in Heorot before king Hrothgar and the poet wanted to praise his ability, he refers to his song as *on spēd wrecan*, *Beow.* 873) to the power of doing wonders (*wundra spēd*, *Phoen.* 394). The power inherent in this word could also bring happiness, riches and abundance of cattle, treasures, money, progeny. Cf. *eorðan spēde*, 'the riches of this earth' (*The Soul's Address to the Body*, Mackie, xvii. 72); *tūddor-spēd* (*Gen. A.* 2138), *gold-spēdig guma*, 'dives auri' (*Jul.* 39); barren land, which cannot produce a harvest, is called *unspēdig* (*Gen. A.* 345). This last shade of meaning is well attested in prose texts too, as can be seen from Bosworth-Toller; cf. *he næfð rihtwisnysse speda and wisdomes goldhordas ðe sind sōðe welan* (from Aelfric's *Homilies*). Traces of the above senses are also instanced in OS.: *Hel.* 1901-2 *huand iu thiū spōt cumid, helpe fon himile*; *Gen.* 106-8 *spuodda thie mahta is handgiuuererek, hēlag drohtin, that im uuard sunu giboran* (further, promote); *Hel.* 3453-4 *ni mag ina is likhamo an unspuod forspanan* (evil deed, sin).

The descendants of Germ. **spōd-* and its derivations in modern German and English (*sputen* and *speed*) show that the signification 'quickness, celerity' formed part of the semantic range of the root-word. We are on much safer ground here than in the case of *drēam*, because there is sufficient linguistic evidence to prove that this meaning never died out completely in any of the old dialects. It should be noted, however, that the word is confined to West-Germanic; no trace of it is to be found in ON. As for the situation in OHG. it is most remarkable that copious material is attested in the glosses and in Notker, whereas neither Otfrid nor Tatian yield a single instance; it looks as if *spuot* and its derivations had been a dialectal feature of the Upper-German area. The following instances are all from Notker's translation of Boetius (quoted from P. Piper, *Die Schriften Notkers und seiner Schule*, vol. i, Freiburg and Tübingen, 1882).

(gi) *spuoen*: 99, 22 *ūnde uūto inrēht táz sī. dāz einēr den ānderen ānafōrderōt. sō spūot tero suasionis. ūnde dero dissuasionis*; 128, 19 *ānderesuūto nespūot is tir*; 164, 28 *sō imo dēs nespūot*; 210, 14 *uulle du dēnchen chād si. ān die ērenen gegihtē. sō spūot tir sār dēs tih zebehūgenne. dāz tu fōre chāde (si respicias inquit priora*

concessa ne illud quidem longius aberit. quin recorderis. quod te dudum nescire confessus es); 324, 14 *alde uuār spūot is imo zeirfārenne?* 156, 11 *nōh in nespūota dēs sie uuōltōn*, and similarly 224, 3 *dēs nespūota imo*; 233, 6 *tēmo ouh tēs kespūot. tēs in lūstet chād si. sōlt tū dēs māhte zuuēlōn?* (*quem uero uideas effecisse. quod uoluerit. num etiam potuisse dubitabis?*)

spuotig: 78, 21 *nōh ih nemāg ferlōugenen mīnero spūotigun ferte* (*uelocissimum cursum*); 178, 28 *ūnde sie hōho erhēuende in spūotigēn sinnen* (*leuibz curribz*); 24, 20 *mīt tien caracteribus uuērdent spūotigo erudren āllero numerorum diuisiones. ūnde multiplicationes*; 121, 29 *pe dīu nemāg ih iz ōuh nieht spūotigo gesdgen* (*eoque uix quo uerbis explicare sententiam*); 203, 27 *tīu skēident sih sāmfto. ūnde lōufent āber spūotigo. zesāmine* (*. . . cito rursus relabuntur*); 211, 2 *dāz sāgo ih tīr spūotigo* (*breviter exponam*); 298, 10 *tō er spūotigo fēren uuōlta*; 333, 24 *nū lōse hāra. dāz ih tīr is pīlde gegēbe spūotigo* (*nam ut liqueat hoc breui exemplo*).

This is admittedly only a small section of the Notker material, but it seems sufficient to show two things: first, that the element 'quickness, speed' holds its own beside other semantic elements; secondly, that this signification is apparently attached to the adjective and adverb. It is, incidentally, well instanced in MHG., but later disappeared in the High-German area, whereas it continued to live in the Netherlands and in Low-German, whence it was borrowed again into High-German literature and thereby acquired eventually a safe position in modern German speech. In his famous poem *An Schwager Kronos* Goethe still uses the dialectal form *spude dich* (1774; line 1).¹

It was mentioned above that a few traces of the element 'quickness, speed' survive in OE. too (sense I in Bosworth-Toller). But they are scanty and almost negligible in comparison with the predominant position of the other senses. These latter seem to have expressed conceptions so vital to the Anglo-Saxon mind that they succeeded in largely obscuring, if not altogether ousting, the more commonplace idea of the root-word. It is significant that even *spēdig* has so radically come under this influence that not a single instance in OE. texts betrays a survival of the older sense which has managed to adhere to the corresponding OHG. adjective *spuotig*.

It remains to find out if there was a connecting link between the two basic conceptions as represented by *drēam* and *spēd* respectively. It cannot be denied that they originally formed separate semantic units, even if the meaning of both words occasionally tends to be a little vague and uncertain. But I think it can be proved that their spheres of influence finally coalesced. Wealth, opulence, abundance are instrumental in bringing about happiness and bliss, so that it is psychologically understandable if these ideas are linked up in the human mind. That this must have happened in Anglo-Saxon times is shown by the semantic ambiguity of such words as *blād*

¹ Cf. F. Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, 1934, sb. *sputen*.

and *ēad*, *ēadig* which combined the ideas of wealth and happiness. But even in certain derivations of *spēd* there are unmistakable traces of the latter signification.¹

It follows that these two originally divergent ideas had practically become synonymous. The very vagueness of OE. poetic diction makes it difficult to speculate on the exact nature of this process or to determine precisely where they differed and where they coincided; but they certainly seem to have become different expressions for the same powerful underlying idea which I have tried to describe above. Both words present a striking similarity in their earlier history; both have risen to a prominent position in the vocabulary of the Anglo-Saxons. But this resemblance becomes even more fascinating when their subsequent fate is considered. The dominating influence of that particular part of their semantic range where they converge in OE. speech was not to last into ME. times. There was one point, however, in which their later history differed. Whereas *spēd* retained parts of those elements of meaning in modern English that had given it such a powerful place in the OE. language, the decay of *drĒam* was complete and final. But in both cases the older and more commonplace ideas attached to these words, which had so long been obscured and pushed aside, triumphantly reappeared on the surface and asserted their rights in the new linguistic growth that sprang up after the Norman Conquest.

I was first struck by this extraordinary resemblance between the two words when I discovered that the text in which the earliest examples of the meaning 'somnia' for *drem*, *dreme* appear in early ME. likewise contains a definite increase in the meaning 'quickness, celerity' in *spēd*. This is the early ME. *Genesis and Exodus*, preserved in a manuscript written presumably about 1300, but composed perhaps fifty years earlier, in the dialect of the East Midland area.² No traces of the OE. meanings of *drĒam* are to be found in this remarkable poem. According to its editor the language is neither that of Robert of Gloucester, nor of Robert of Brunne, but rather that of Laȝamon and Orm. This statement must be

¹ Senses given in Grein-Köhler: *ēad* 'dives, opulentus, beatus'; cf. *ēad mæg* 'virgo beata' *Jul.* 352; *ēad* (noun) 'possessio, opes, divitiae, prosperitas, felicitas, beatitudo'; *ēadgian* 'beatificare'; *ēadig* 'beatus, felix, gaudii plenius, faustus, abundans, opulentus, dives'; *blād* (sense 5) 'ubertas, prosperitas, abundantia, successus, beatitudo, gloria, dignitas' (cf. H. C. Wyld, *Essays and Studies*, xi. 87-8, and Grönbech, op. cit., pp. 316-17); *spēdig* 'prosper, felix, dives, potens'; *spēdlice* 'propere, prompte, feliciter, effecte'.

² The poem was edited by R. Morris, *E.E.T.S.* 7 (1865). The author is anonymous, but certain similarities in grammatical and scribal forms with those of the *Bestiary* which was composed at the same time suggest a joint author (or scribe) for both works (cf. Wright, *Reliquiae Antiquae*, p. 208; Morris, *Preface*, xiii, esp. note 1). Other important works of the period belonging to the same dialect district are Robert Mannyng of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne* and *Chronicle*, *Ormulum* and *Havelok* [cf. K. Luick, *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* (Leipzig, 1921), § 32].

accepted with some caution, since it seems to be based chiefly on phonological and syntactical features. Words of Romance origin are scarce, but the Norse element is also very small.¹ This fact supplies some additional evidence against those who would explain the new meaning in *drem*, *dreme* as a sense-loan from Scandinavian.

I shall now proceed to give a complete collection of instances of *drem*, *dremen*, &c., in their proper context, such as they appear in the *Genesis* and *Exodus*. Only a small number of instances is referred to in Morris's Glossary to the text. Ehrensperger (op. cit.) gives the following statistics: *dreme* 17 times, *drempte* 8 times, but he appears to have overlooked 2 instances; I have counted 18 times *dreme*, 8 times *drempte*, and a single instance of *dremen*. Quotations follow the numbering of lines in Morris's text.

953 of Abraham's dream: *God seide him ðor a soðe drem*; 1179 on *dreme him cam tiding for-quat*; 1605 of Jacob's dream: *(he) slep and sag (i.e. saw) an soðe drem*; 1757 of Laban's dream: *so was he frig(t)ed ear in drem*; 1918 Joseph's brothers envy him his dreams: *quanne he hem adde is dremes told*; 1941 *quat-so him drempte ðor quiles he slep*; 1944 *quat-so his dremes owen a-wold* (i.e. may signify); 2049 about Joseph's interpretation of dreams: *hem drempte dremes boðen onigt*; 2054 *harde dremes ogen a-wold ðat*; 2056 *tel me ðin drem*; 2059 *me drempte, ic stod at a win-tre*; 2066 *me drempte, als ic was wune to don*; 2067 'Good is' *quað Joseph, 'to dremen of win'*; 2078 *me drempte ic bar bread-lepes ðre*; 2085-6 'me wore leuere' *quad Joseph, 'of eddi dremes rechen swep* (i.e. to explain the meaning of pleasant dreams; *eddi* from OE. *ēadig*); 2095 *po drempte pharaon king a drem*; 2102 *ðis drem ne mai ðe king for-geþen*; 2103 *an oðer drem cam him biþoren*; 2112 *ðes dremes swep ne wot he nogt* (cf. 2086); 2114 *ðe kude vndon ðis dremes bond* (i.e. this dream's power or meaning); 2116 *of ðat him drempte in prisun ðer*; 2122 *if he can rechen ðis dremes wold* (i.e. explain the meaning of this dream); 2123 *he told him quat him drempte o nigt*; 2124 *and iosep rechede his drem wel rigt*; 2125 *ðis two dremes boðen ben on*.

As for *spēd* and *spēden* (no instance of *spēdig* is found) there are 25 examples in *Genesis* and *Exodus*. The different meanings are divided among them according to the following classification:

spēd 'power' (O.E.D. i. 2) 25, 2995.

spēd 'wealth, abundance' (O.E.D. i. 1) 122.

spēd 'bliss, happiness, prosperity, success' (O.E.D. i. 3) 240, 310, 2138, 2221, 3820, 4048.

spēd 'assistance, help' (O.E.D. i. 4) 2830, 2922, 3929; it should be noted that the earliest instance of this meaning recorded in the O.E.D. is from Richard Rolle's *Pricke of Conscience*, about a hundred years later.

spēd(en) 'to have success or ill luck', according to the context (cf. O.E.D. i. 3) 1585, 2303, 3314.

¹ Cf. Morris, p. xxi.

spēd 'quickness, celerity' (*O.E.D.* ii) 935, 1083, 1221, 1598, 1738, 1879, 1950, 2548, 2576, 3178 (*ut-spēd* 'run away').

The ten instances representing the sense 'quickness, celerity' appear in the following contexts:

935 *Abram leuede ðis hot in spēd* (he quickly believed this promise); 1083 *ðo seiden ðis angeles to loth wið spēd* (the angels told Lot speedily); 1221 *Abraham rapede him sone in spēd* (he went away speedily); 1598 *fro bersabe he ferde wið spēd*; 1738 and *greiðet him ðedenward wið spēd* (hurried away with speed); 1879 *Jacob wente fro ðeden in spēd*; 1949-50 *Vdas ðor quiles gaf hem red, ðat was fulfilt of derne spēd* (bad advice, carried out in secret haste); 2548 *ðis ebris waxen (in) michil spēd* (they increase rapidly); 2576 *get ðo childre woxen in spēd* (yet the children increased speedily); 3178 *Egip̃te folc hem hauen ut-spēd* (either: hurried them away, or: took to their heels).

The crumbling structure of this field of synonyms demonstrates, even within the limited section whose history was traced above, the strong disintegrating influences of a declining culture on the development of language. It reveals linguistic phenomena which are apt to confirm the belief that speech is a sound instrument to test the growth and decay of ideas.

But even if consequences of this far-reaching import may be anticipated from a limited semantic investigation, it must not be assumed that the genetic process which so radically changed a uniform and well-balanced system of conventional expression was simple and straightforward. When the change began it exerted its influence with varying force on the different parts of the field. Shifts of meaning are invariably hesitating and gradual. If certain meanings after a long lease of vigorous life are suddenly attacked by the phosphorescence of decay, they nevertheless show quite often a remarkable tenacity in the very period of their decline. Relics of older and long-forgotten senses may linger on for centuries or eke out a humble existence in some rustic dialect or sectional vocabulary. Both *drēam* and *spēd* are plain illustrations of this fact. In the case of the former the old group of significations continued to live into the fourteenth century, whereas the elements 'success, prosperity', though nowadays obsolescent, still occupy a place in the semantic range of modern Engl. *speed*. It should therefore be realized that each synonym within the field has also a history of its own, even if these separate histories are closely bound up with the ultimate fate of the field as a whole.

This last argument is of considerable importance. Its bearing on the methods used throughout the present investigation may finally be illustrated by briefly considering two other words that come within the compass of the field of synonyms of which *drēam* and *spēd* are outstanding representatives. I do not propose to go into their history in detail or even to

present a collection of instances as extensive as in the case of those principal two words; I have merely selected a few aspects of their historical development which may serve as a corroboration of the theories advanced above.

OE. *gamen*, *gomen* 'jocus, oblectamentum, gaudium, jubilum, laetitia, ludus' is another word distinctly expressive of the joy of living among the Germanic warrior class, though it seems somewhat more restricted in its semantic range than its powerful competitor *drēam*. 'A pleasant, attractive sound' was obviously the dominating element; in *Beowulf* the harp is twice called *gomen-wudu* (*Beow.* 1065, 2108), whose charming music is elsewhere referred to as *gomen glēobēames* (*Beow.* 2263). That *gomen* chiefly denoted bliss and rejoicing in the banquet hall is obvious from *Seaf.* 20-2, where *hleahfor wera* and *medodrin*c are specially mentioned in connexion with this word. The word is also instanced in the other Germ. dialects. Cf. *Hel.* 2749-50 *that siu thar fora them gastiu*n **gaman** *afshōbi fagar an flettie*; *ibid.* 2762 *an themu gastseli* **gamen** *up ahuof*. In ON. there are several interesting compound-formations, such as *gaman-rúnar* (*Hávam.* 120. 6 and 130. 6), *gaman-ferð* (*Edd. Min.* p. 97, J 1a 4). A special side-development in this dialect seems to be 'love between man and woman or girl'; cf. *Hávam.* 99. 6, 161. 3, *För Skirn.* 39. 6; *vilt við meyar mannz* **gaman** *hafa* (*Edd. Min.* p. 128, stanza 7, lines 7-8). Cf. finally the instructive context *Edd. Min.* p. 129 sb. G, lines 16-17 *til* **gamans**, *glímu ok glēði allrar*. Here we have a noble, courtly, and impeccable term of poetic diction in the Germ. dialects. If we now turn our attention to instances of this word in early ME. texts the first signs of a deterioration of meaning become clearly apparent. But the fate of the word is still in the balance. It seems still untarnished in such phrases as *Hav.* 2935 *and liueden ay in blisse and* **gamen**, or *Hav.* 2963 *Hauelok bi-lefte wit(h) ioie and* **gamen**. A comparatively neutral instance is *Hav.* 2577 *haue ich you gadred for no* **gamen**. But there is a definitely unsavoury element in the word in *Hav.* 465-9 *Godard herde here wa: ther-offe yaf he nouht a stra, but tok þe maydnes bothe samen, al-so it were up-on hiis* **gamen**, *al-so he wolde with hem leyke*. In *Gen. and Ex.* the word is rare; but of the four instances recorded (412, 1214, 2015, 3498) there are two which exhibit a clear pejorative tendency. When Ishmael mocked Isaac and played tricks on him, the poet found no better word to describe this than *gamen*; 1214 *and ysmael pleide hard* **gamen**. But it is even worse when the word is used to denote the forbidden pleasures which Potiphar's wife hoped to enjoy by Joseph's seduction: 2013-16 *his wif wurð wilde, and nam in ðogt vn-riht-wis luue, and swanc for nogt, one and stille ðogt hire* **gamen** *wið ioseph spoken and plaigen samen*.

A strikingly similar development is exhibited by the ME. descendants of the senses represented by OE. *sælig*. Its modern derivative *silly* empha-

tically illustrates how far a pejorative trend may go in the history of a word.¹ But the full impact of deterioration seems to have hit the word considerably later than the other terms discussed above. It is true that the beginning of deviations from the firmly established sense in OE. can be traced in *Hav.* 477, 499 (innocent, artless) and elsewhere; but as the collection of instances from *Gen. and Ex.* shows,² the word had hardly entered on its downward career in early ME., at least not in biblical texts.

¹ The original meaning of the word was 'blessed, eternally happy'; this gradually shifted and became 'innocent, good, docile, unpretentious, artless', with a side-development 'rustic, plain, simple, unexperienced, easily taken in'. The final stage is represented by 'insignificant, trivial, inane, foolish, childish' (cf. the elaborate discussion in Schreuder, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-53). A more extensive collection of instances might even reveal further semantic shades than those mentioned by Schreuder: cf. *Gen. and Ex.* 2412 in *softe reste and sell mel* ('nourishing'?), or 1244 *ðat was hire ðor sell timing* ('fortunate, propitious'?). Incidentally, OE. *sæl*, (*ge*)*sælig* offer further evidence for the fact that the ideas of wealth and bliss have a tendency to coalesce in Anglo-Saxon times. Their meanings range from 'salus, prosperitas' to 'beatitas, laetitia' and from 'opulentus' to 'fortunatus, felix, beatus' respectively.

² The word occurs *Gen. and Ex.* 31, 64, 240, 266, 759, (*vn-*) 1073, 1244, 1532, (*vn-*) 2315, 2412, 2514, 2533, 2546, 2782, 4079, 4161. 'Bliss, happiness' are the prevailing significations.

BISHOP HALL'S MEDITATIONS

By H. FISCH

THE work of Professor E. N. S. Thompson¹ and Miss Helen C. White² provides some guidance to the seventeenth-century Meditation, less to its sixteenth-century background. The development of the form in the sixteenth century would make an interesting study but one which cannot be undertaken here if Hall's Meditations are to be fully investigated. The main lines may be briefly indicated, however. In the first place, there was the use of meditation as part of the exercise of practical mysticism. St. Theresa drew up four 'degrees' or 'stairs' of the mystical experience. The first was meditation, wherein 'all the powers of the soul act naturally and freely; they work hard with small result'. The second was the 'prayer of quiet', then 'inebriation, a glorious folly', and finally, 'rapture and ecstasy'.³ St. John of the Cross also put meditation first and, in English mysticism, we have the example of Richard Rolle's *Meditations on the Passion*. St. Augustine, one feels, was also a model for this exalted kind of lyrical expression in its literary form. Hall acknowledged his debt to 'holy and sweet Augustin' as the model for 'extemporal meditation'.⁴

On the other hand, Meditations were often approximated more closely to the liturgical and formal mode and written as more or less set prayers with a personal emphasis. This more regular type of devotional meditation is well exemplified in the work of the Spanish writer, Luis de Granada. In his *Of Prayer and Meditation*, the mystical 'ladder' is, naturally enough, replaced by a more humble discipline:—"The five parts of this exercise, which be Preparation; readinge: meditation: thanksgiving: and petition." The different Meditations are assigned to different times of the day:

The one for the morninge, which treateth of the most bitter passion of our redeemer: and the other for the evening, or night, which treateth of the other pointes and matters here before mentioned.⁵

Thomas Adams hinted at the same principle when he wrote of 'meditation' as a sabbath-day exercise:

Man is bound to it. . . . Because he hath a special day appointed for this

¹ *The Seventeenth Century English Essay* (University of Iowa, 1926).

² *English Devotional Literature, [Prose] 1600-1640* (University of Wisconsin Studies, Madison, 1931).

³ Cf. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Edinburgh, 1917), under 'Mysticism'.

⁴ *Works*, ed. P. Wynter (Oxford, 1863), vi. 49. It is from the third chapter of *The Art of Divine Meditation* (1606).

⁵ Luis de Granada, *Of Prayer and Meditation* [Tr. R. Hopkins (1582)], p. 31. The translation is from the Antwerp edition of the treatise (1572).

solemn business; that he should rest from his own works, and meditate on Gods works.¹

The difference between meditation and the Meditation as a literary form is sometimes—as in this passage quoted—not altogether clear. What Hall inherited was simply the incubator for a somewhat amorphous variety of religious thought and experience. What he added to it were a precise literary form and a conscious principle.

Before Hall came to write the first two Centuries of his *Meditations and Vowes Divine and Morall* (1605), Bacon had introduced further variety by including twelve *Meditationes Sacrae* in his *Essaies. Religious Meditations. Places of Perswasion and Disswasion* of 1597. They are skilful discussions of ethical and spiritual themes but the tone is speculative rather than personal and devotional. He wrote them as religious meditations to distinguish them both in subject-matter and morality from the 'Essaies'. Bacon's concern in these *Meditationes Sacrae* was more or less consciously to justify his powerful advocacy of practical ethics as displayed in the 'Essaies' by a perfunctory skirmish under another banner. To question his sincerity is scarcely relevant, but it is important to notice the careful differentiation of moral experience which lies behind the grouping. The relatively greater success of the 'Essaies' is an indication of the extent to which practical ethics predominated over religious ones in the total moral composition of Bacon's mind.

Hall, who set the pattern for succeeding practitioners in the seventeenth century, aimed in his Meditations at something quite different. It was not to be a 'form' which would correspond to one isolated mental compartment. His mind operated quite naturally at the spiritual level, and the Meditation was to be the means of referring all his wayward thoughts and all seemingly insignificant worldly events to the higher life. It was to become the repository for all the miscellaneous gear which the ruminating but spiritually directed mind collected in its contacts with the world of books, men, and nature. The first three Centuries (1605-6) may, in fact, be read as a compendium of Elizabethan and Jacobean commonplaces, enlightened, however, by Hall's own characteristic doctrines and coloured by his attitudes. Not only do we find interpreted for us some of the religious tenets of the Church of England as understood by Hall, such as Original Sin (i, § 94), the Second Coming (i, § 100), and the Devil (ii, § 45), but also the broader philosophical generalities of the day, such as Man a Microcosm (i, §§ 78, 83, and 93), Adversity and Prosperity (ii, § 6), the World a Stage (ii, § 30), The Four Elements (ii, § 86), some discussion of

¹ Thomas Adams, *Works* (Edinburgh 1862), iii. 121. From *Meditations upon some Parts of the Creed* (1629).

Dreams (iii, § 20), Natural History (iii, § 18), Pilgrimages (iii, § 34), and Monuments (i, § 70). The list could be multiplied. As Hall himself says in *The Art of Divine Meditation*: 'God hath not straited us for matter, having given us the scope of the whole world; so that there is no creature, event, action, speech which may not afford us new matter of meditation.'¹ Hall, as his son Robert reported of him, wrote Meditations throughout his long career;² a consideration of the various collections which he published from 1605 onwards shows both a remarkable consistency in general principles and much incidental variation and flexibility.

A characteristic example from the first Century shows the fully developed manner:

Some promise what they cannot do, as Satan to Christ: some what they could, but mean not to do, as the sons of Jacob to the Shechemites: some what they meant for the time and after retrait, as Laban to Jacob: some what they do also give, but unwillingly, as Herod: some what they willingly give and after repent them, as Joshua to the Gibeonites. So great distrust is there in man, whether from his impotence or faithlessness. As in other things, so in this, I see God is not like man: but in whatever he promises, he approves himself most faithful, both in his ability and performances. I will therefore ever trust God on his bare word; even with hope, besides hope, above hope, against hope; and onwards, I will rely on him for small matters of this life: for how shall I hope to trust him in impossibilities, if I may not in likelihoods? How shall I depend on him for raising my body from dust, and saving my soul, if I mistrust him for a crust of bread towards my preservation? (i, § 10.)

The method is seen to be quite simple. First there is the subject of the meditation, in this case a number of scriptural instances of promise and fulfilment. Then, the moral application, '... so in this, I see God is not like man': then, the vow or confession which both Marcus Aurelius and St. Augustine had considered the main object of meditation. The thinking mind rises through observation and dialectic to affirmation. The whole gives us one fully articulated thought. The spiral movement (what Professor Croll called 'Baroque Style') of the sentence beginning, 'I will therefore ever trust God . . .' is extremely significant. Methods vary according to the different starting-points. Sometimes the starting-point is some quaint conceit as in Century iii, § 67, where Hall is struck by the thought that life is the only thing that gets shorter as it gets longer.

¹ *Works*, vi. 50. Cf. also Jeremy Taylor, *Of Meditation* (1649) in *Works*, ed. Heber (London, 1822), ii. 111: 'For meditation is the duty of all; and therefore God hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding.'

² In his preface to the *Occasional Meditations* (1630), Robert wrote: 'Then it pleased my reverend father sometimes to recreate himself: whose manner it hath been, when any of these meditations have unsought offered themselves unto him, presently to set them down.' Hall, *Works*, ix. 119.

Elsewhere, he gazes in wonder at the glorious variety of human life as displayed around him:

What strange variety of actions doth the eye of God see at once, round about the compass of the earth, and within it! Some building houses, some delving for metals, some marching in troops, or encamping one against another; some bargaining in the market, some travelling on their way, some praying in their closets, others quaffing at the tavern, some rowing in the galleys, others dallying in their chambers; and in short as many different actions as persons. (iii, § 2.)

In the main, however, it is from some ethical or religious observation that he starts rather than from the mundane affairs of his parishioners at Halstead.

Holy Observations (1607) are less interesting, because here the 'confession' generally drops away; they remain contemplative, but didactic rather than personal. The short *sententia* is also less frequent,¹ and a more fluid medium is generally employed to correspond with the diminution here in the intensity of feeling as compared with the earlier collection. The main subject of the *Observations* is Man in his human and spiritual relationships. Hall (though no mystic) is capable of a very distinct spiritual experience. But it is a spiritual activity conducted in its widest possible reference. He shows his range of sensibility, for instance, in no. 50 where he reviews the whole of human learning very briefly in order to demonstrate that 'All arts are maids to divinity'. Hence, he never finds it necessary to look upon the arts and sciences with the self-denying eye of many of his contemporaries. The principle here, as elsewhere, was that of 'allowable variety'. Hall falls short of Bacon in brilliance and energy but his range and mental quality are similar. He was the Bacon of the Church, doing for theology and moral philosophy very much what Bacon did for science and statcraft and not only prepared, like Bacon in his *Meditationes Sacrae* and elsewhere, to take the campaign into the other party's territory, but also to show that it really could be visualized, under the dry light of the spirit, as one campaign. His *lumen siccum* was the arbiter of all experience.

All arts are maids to divinity; therefore they both vail to her and do her service: and she, like a grave mistress, controls them at pleasure. Natural philosophy teacheth, that of nothing can be nothing made, and that from the privation to the habit is no return: divinity takes her up for these; and, upon supernatural principles, teaches her a creation, a resurrection. Philosophy teaches us to follow

¹ In the earlier groups, the Meditation had frequently been reduced to the simple vow or confession itself, the earlier 'parts' being simply assumed or else compressed into the final sentence giving it the effect of an aphorism: e.g. 'I am a stranger even at home; therefore if the dogs of the world bark at me, I neither care nor wonder.' Or, 'I will use my friends as Moses did his rod: while it was a rod, he held it familiarly in his hand; when once a serpent, he ran away from it.' (i, §§ 14 and 23.)

sense as an infallible guide; divinity tells her that faith is of things not seen. Logic teaches us first to discourse, then to resolve; divinity to assent without arguing. . . . The school is well ordered while divinity keeps the chair; but if any other skill usurp it, and check their mistress, there can follow nothing but confusion and atheism. (Obs., § 50.)

The *Occasional Meditations* published and, no doubt, mostly written whilst Hall was Bishop of Exeter contain his most finished performances, though they often lack the vigour and pithy Senecan quality of the earlier *Meditations and Vows*. The main feature of the *Occasional Meditations*¹ is that they are all based on the emblem-usage; i.e. they all start from some clear, visual image or situation which is then given a moral by pursuing its parallels and correspondences. The 'vow' or 'invocation' arises out of the moral. The earlier collections contained hints of the same technique. We find, for instance (*Meditations and Vows*, i, § 4), 'Every vessel is full, if not of liquor, yet of air: so is the heart of man; though by nature it is empty of grace, yet it is full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . .' But the 'emblems' are never worked out so carefully as they are in *Occasional Meditations*.

An example of the fully refined and articulated 'prose-emblem' (as I believe one is justified in calling it) is no. 15, entitled, 'Upon Occasion of a Spider in his Window'.

There is no vice in man whereof there is not some analogy in the brute creatures. As amongst us men there are thieves by land, and pirates by sea, that live by spoil and blood; so is there in every kind amongst them variety of natural sharks; the hawk in the air; the pike in the river; the whale in the sea; the lion and tiger and wolf in the desert; the wasp in the hive; the spider in our window.

Amongst the rest, see how cunningly this little Arabian hath spread out his tent for a prey; how heedfully he watches for a passenger. So soon as ever he hears the noise of a fly afar off, how he hastens to his door! And if that silly heedless traveller do but touch the verge of that unsuspected walk, how suddenly doth he seize upon the miserable booty; and after some strife, binding him fast with those subtle cords, drags the helpless captive after him into his cave!

What is this, but an emblem of those spiritual freebooters that lie in wait for our souls? They are the spiders, we the flies; they have spread their nets of sin: if we be once caught, they bind us fast, and hale us into hell.

O Lord, deliver thou my soul from their crafty ambushes; their poison is greater, their webs both more strong and more insensibly woven. Either teach me to avoid temptation, or make me to break through it by repentance: O let me not be a prey to those fiends that lie in wait for my destruction.²

¹ The *Occasional Meditations* are 140 in number. They appeared first in 1630, the 91 *Meditations* of that edition being supplemented by a further 49 in the edition of 1633. Hall thought them worthy of a Latin translation in 1635.

² *Works*, x, 127-8.

Here we have an introductory paragraph, then a short paragraph containing the *protasis*, then one containing the *apodosis*¹ or moral, then the invocation or apostrophe. It is a very stylized method. Most often there are three only, and quite frequently, just two, the emblem-description and its moral being combined. But the formal style and structure and the allegorical content remain. The second paragraph of the long extract above shows the use of the grand manner for (slightly humorous) descriptive purposes and, in fact, the style is more generally dignified and oratorical than witty and Senecan. The most remarkable effects are obtained, however, by the occasional use of utter simplicity combined with a tone of grave decorum as in the opening sentence of no. 14, entitled, 'Upon Occasion of a Redbreast coming into his Chamber'. 'Pretty bird, how cheerfully dost thou sit and sing; and yet knowest not where thou art, nor where thou shalt make thy next meal, and at night must shroud thyself in a bush for lodging!'

Francis Quarles was to be the great seventeenth-century exemplar of the verse-emblem, and so one can do no better than demonstrate from his practice the fundamental interconnexion of the Emblem and the Meditation. His *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations and Observations* (1632) are evidently written in imitation of Hall's *Occasional Meditations* which had appeared two years earlier: they both have meditations on a Sun-dial, for instance, which may usefully be compared. What Hall had done in prose Quarles was doing in verse. At the same time they are similar to the more traditional emblem-poems (with illustrations) of his *Emblemes* (1635). In the *Divine Fancies*, wherever the emblem-principle is employed, there is an internal and assumed visual element and that is how Hall's *Occasional Meditations* are to be read.²

The underlying idea was that, not only did visual situations lead the mind by a sort of concatenation of careful correspondences into the spiritual world, but that higher significances were, in fact, divinely implanted into the world of nature and material things and these could be

¹ Cf. R. Boyle, *Works* (London, 1744), ii: 'A Discourse touching Occasional Meditations.'

² Rosemary Freeman's article, 'George Herbert and the Emblem-Books', *R.E.S.*, xvii (1941), is concerned with emblem-poetry where there are no accompanying illustrations. I believe one is justified in pointing out inherently emblematic usage in *prose* also. Quarles's verse-Meditations represent a genre parallel to Hall's prose-Meditations. Apart from the emblematic imagery and structure which the two writers share, they acknowledge the same guiding principle. Hall had written (1606): 'Our Divine Meditation is nothing else but a bending of the mind upon some spiritual object, through divers forms of discourse, until our thoughts come to an issue.' Quarles, in the Dedication to his *Divine Fancies* (1632), writes:

That, like the painful Bee, I may derive
From sundry Flow'rs, to store my slender Hive.
Yet, may my thoughts not so divided be,
But they may mixe againe and fixe in thee.

extracted by the meditating mind.¹ Hall wrote in his *Susurrum cum Deo* (1650): 'I should hate all secular diversions, if they should take thee for a moment quite out of my sight; if I did not find that, I may still refer them to thee, and enjoy thee in them.' The author of a metaphysical conceit or an 'Emblem' was, therefore, not so much seeing a witty connexion as witnessing a form of revelation; hence, the intensely imaginative quality of the result. Robert Boyle discerned this in discussing emblematic meditations.² The writer of *Meditations* was to be one 'that can (as it were) make the world vocal by furnishing every creature, and almost every occurrence, with a tongue to entertain him with, and can make the little accidents of his life, and the very flowers of his garden, read him lectures of ethics or Divinity'.

Although other elements enter, Hall's *Occasional Meditations* are best understood by reference to the emblem-usage. It is this which anchors them so firmly in the visible world. The eye is constantly turned outward and so, if they lack the fervour of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, they may often give us illuminating glimpses of the contemporary scene. Mark the fragment of social history contained in no. 92, entitled, 'Upon the Sight of an Harlot Carted': 'Everyone strives to express his detestation of the fact by some token of revenge: one casts mire, another water, another rotten eggs, upon the miserable offender.'

The single Century of *Select Thoughts* which Hall published in 1647 still belongs to the Meditation-genre, but these are more diffuse and much less stylized than the examples considered above and the tone varies from confessional to didactic. The general unity of theme is retained, though there is not always the same distinctness in beginning and ending, nor the same formal roundness in the whole as in the earlier compositions. But he is still capable of the clear-cut, formal, emblematic Meditation and perhaps there is no better example from the whole of his Works than the following:

When I saw my precious watch (now through an unhappy fall grown irregular) taken asunder, and lying scattered upon the workman's shopboard; so as here lay a wheel, there the balance; here one gimmer, there another; straight my ignorance was ready to think, when and how will all these ever piece together again in their former order? But when the skilful artisan had taken it a while in hand, and curiously pinned the joints, it now began to return to its wonted shape and constant motion, as if it had never been disordered. How could I choose but see in this the just emblem of a distempered church and state? wherein, if all seemed disjointed, and every wheel laid aside by itself, so as an unknowing beholder would despair of a redress; yet if it shall please the great Artist of heaven to put his hand unto it, how soon might it return to an happy resettlement! Even so,

¹ Cf. Richard H. Walters, 'Henry Vaughan and the Alchemists', *R.E.S.*, xxiii (1947), 107-22.

² *Works*, ii. 147.

blessed Lord, for thy great mercy's sake, make up the breaches of thy Sion, and repair the ruins of thy Jerusalem.¹

He still retains the athletic, Senecan manner, also, for moral demonstration but here, as in his final group, *Susurrium cum Deo. Soliloquies: or, Holy Self-Conferences of the devout Soul* (1650), he cultivates a solemn and refined simplicity. The eighty long paragraphs of the latter volume are more soberly earnest than the Meditations of earlier years: there is much less rhetorical virtuosity whether of the Senecan type or of the grand manner. By now his thoughts move fluently among spiritual things and rarely turn to other subjects. 'The world hath so clogged me this while with his worthless and base lumber, that I have been ready to sink under the weight; and what have I got by it but a lame shoulder and a galled back?'²

Nevertheless, Hall's progress is marked more by consistency than change and his practice of admitting 'secular diversions' in order to illustrate spiritual truths is reaffirmed in no. 53, but in his extreme old age he prays that 'whatever occasion shall take me up, I may never be out of thy blessed society: . . . that even in the midst of the market I may be still alone with thee'.³

If Hall's achievement is viewed as a whole, he will be seen to have brought together many elements in order to furnish forth his new prose-form and provide a model for his successors. His Meditations assimilate features of the aphorism, the metaphysical conceit, the exemplum, the emblem, the moral essay, the prayer, the Character, the mystical 'vow', and the exegetical gloss. Indeed, by its nature, Meditation-writing defined by Hall as 'the bending of the mind upon some spiritual object through divers forms of discourse'⁴ draws upon such miscellaneous sources both for form and subject-matter that it constantly tends to lose its distinctive quality and become merged into one or other of the different parts of its background. (*The Breathings of the Devout Soul* (1648) are, by this token, to be regarded as prayers.) But Hall did more than anyone else to give the Meditation a character of its own, as his contemporaries generously acknowledged and as his imitators implicitly testified.⁵ John Whitefoot,

¹ No. ix, in *Works*, vii. 564-5.

² No. xxvi, *ibid.* viii. 44. See Bishop Hall's *Hard Measure* (1647) for an account of his sufferings in the Civil War to which this passage refers.

³ *Works*, viii. 67.

⁴ *Ibid.* vi. 48.

⁵ Hall's successors are practically all his imitators to some extent. A more interesting successor than Quarles is Arthur Warwick. His extremely popular *Resolved Meditations and Premeditated Resolutions* (1634) are not only based strictly on Hall's method and manner but echo him repeatedly in phrase and draw from him repeatedly in theme. He differs in style by being more Senecan and posturing more for clever effects. The 'witty' wording of the title is a good indication of this as is also the final Meditation of the book where we are given a good definition of what Boyle was later to call *Meleteticks*: 'Meditation is a busie search in the store-house of fantasie for some Ideas of matters, to be cast in

in his funeral-oration, spoke of Hall as 'the first that taught this church the art of divine meditation'.¹

The treatise referred to is Hall's manual, *The Art of Divine Meditation* (1606). Hall has no 'rule' to offer for the short or extemporal Meditation at this stage (see especially Chapter III, 'Of extemporal meditation there may be much use, no rule') but his whole approach is concerned with the *genre* as a literary-exercise as well as a devotional-form. It was the conscious interpretation of phenomena and its formulation in words, however difficult that task was, which constituted the spiritual discipline. Similarly, in the final discovery of the meanings inherent in the material, the satisfaction of the artist was not to be differentiated from the joy of the humble receiver of grace. So that what Hall, the earnest devotee and spiritual counsellor, has to teach is a discipline which owes much to what Hall had, no doubt, taught his students at Cambridge during his tenure of the Readership in Rhetoric.² The principles contained in the treatise have a combined literary and spiritual application.

The main principle was waywardness ('divers forms of discourse'), combined with punctilious attention to the main, spiritual object of the exercise, 'Constant both in time and in matter; both in a set course and in an hour reserved for this work, and in an unwearied prosecution of it once begun' (Chapter VII).³ So that, the Meditation, by nature and origin, has much of the inconsequence of the occasional essay, but it also has a seriousness, a compactness, and a unity of thought which give it a quite distinctive literary character. Primarily, it was an 'inward inquisition made into our heart' and one, moreover, that had as its object the discovery of something of spiritual value. Hence, the sense of trial and effort is communicated as the mind climbs on in the ascent to Truth and this is reflected quite naturally in a style, athletic, sinewy, and highly wrought. There is tension in the writing itself. But there was also the consolation which came with the achievement, within the Meditation, of spiritual illumination. And this second function corresponds to the fuller rhetoric which I have loosely termed the 'grand manner'. 'By how much more hard they are to intreat, by so much more precious they are being obtained.' So that Hall's advice is: 'Persist therefore, and prevail: persist till thou hast prevailed: so that which thou beganest with difficulty shall end in comfort.'⁴ It is hence easy to understand why, with the passage of years, and

the moulds of resolution into some forms of words or actions; In which search when I have used my greatest diligence, I find this in the conclusion, that to meditate on the Best is the best of Meditations: and a resolution to make a good end is a good end of my resolutions.'

¹ Hall, *Works*, i, p. lxxiii.

² Cf. George Lewis, *Life of Joseph Hall* (London, 1886), pp. 40-1.

³ Hall, *Works*, vi. 52.

⁴ Ibid. 55.

the winning of greater spiritual knowledge, the tension is relaxed and in groups of Meditations like the *Susurrum cum Deo* there is more of the austere simplicity which comes from inward assurance and less of the tension of the aphorism and antithesis which are produced by the 'upward motion of the mind as it rises in energy, and views the same point from new levels'.¹ What had begun with difficulty had ended in comfort.

The greater part of the treatise is devoted, however, not to the short or 'extemporal' Meditation but to the 'meditation deliberate' or the long, meditative discourse. If the strictly devotional form corresponding to the former was the *prayer*, that corresponding to the deliberate Meditation was the *sermon*. But Hall aimed at something half-way between a prayer and an essay in the former case and something half-way between a sermon and a classical oration in the latter case. And the 'rule' given corresponds in a remarkable fashion to the 'rule' given for the classical oration by Wilson in his *Arte of Rhetorique* (1560). Hall's long Meditations are far less interesting, however, than the extemporal type. The example, 'Of Eternal Life', embodied in the treatise itself is, in the main, turgid and mannered in style and not very convincing in tone. The 'Meditation of Death, according to the former Rules' is more strongly conceived and written, and, in an age when some of the greatest prose was inspired by the subject of Death, Hall's composition is worthy of being ranked very highly indeed. But the 'rules' were largely abandoned after these first two attempts and subsequent long Meditations like 'An Holy Rapture or a Pathetical Meditation &c.'² or 'The Great Mystery of Godliness'³ are really quite free, devotional discourses with a certain formality in beginning and ending which may derive from the 'rules' set out in 1606.

Hall's real contribution was indeed to the establishment of the short Meditation as a 'form' and the study of its further development culminating in the famous Meditations of James Hervey in the eighteenth century would, no doubt, show precisely the extent of Hall's influence. Reviewing the period quite briefly, it seems to me that there are several important distinctions to be made in later writings. First, there are the mystical Meditations of the kind to be written by Traherne, then the more secular type to be written later by Robert Boyle and of which Hall had really laid the foundation in *Occasional Meditations* if not earlier, and finally there are the linked, autobiographical type going back to St. Augustine's *Confessions* and represented in the seventeenth century by Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, and several steps in my *Sicknes* (1634) and by some of Boyle's *Occasional Reflections*. It is the second type which inspired Swift's brilliant parody.

¹ M. W. Croll, 'The Baroque Style in Prose', in *Studies in English Philology* (Univ. of Minnesota, 1929), p. 435 ff.

² Hall, *Works*, vii. 544 et seqq.

³ Ibid. viii. 115.

Boyle's discussion of the Meditation is worthy of careful study. It clearly leads on from Hall whilst taking several independent steps forward. Hall had established the seventeenth-century Meditation so firmly that any departures from his practice required excuse:

I know it is a new thing, that I have ventured to put some occasional reflections into dialogues. But the reader will be less startled at my deviating in this, and other things from Bishop Hall's way of writing occasional meditations, if I acknowledge, that not to prepossess or bias my fancy, I purposely (till of late) forbade myself the perusing of that eloquent prelate's devout reflections.¹

He extended the range of 'Meleteticks' by introducing the further variety of the dramatic Dialogue. Essentially, however, his conception of what was required is the same as the one we have extracted from Hall's writings: 'The nature of this kind of Composition requires not any other, than a loose and desultory way of writing.'² The meditation-writer was one 'that does assiduously enough converse with the works of nature and the productions of art, to think he has the means of furnishing himself with pretty store and variety of comparisons'. Hall would have agreed with his further canon that, 'though when one treats of various subjects, somewhat differing styles are needed to be accommodated to them; yet this is to be so done, as still to preserve a certain dignity in expressions'.³ He explains how accidental sights and events can lead the mind to God: 'Birds and beasts' could be turned

not only into teachers of ethics, but oftentimes into doctors of divinity, and, by compelling senseless creatures to reveal truths to us, that they were never acquainted with themselves, perform really something like that, which was but pretended by the ancient augurs and other diviners the heathen world admired; who took upon them by the casual flights of birds, and inspection of the intrails of beasts, to learn the will of heaven.⁴

Boyle was interested in divinity and ethics but it was really the connexions between the *protasis* and the *apodosis*, and the careful scrutiny of detail and observation of phenomena which was required in following them up, which appealed to his scientific mind: 'The connection of thoughts within the mind may be and frequently is, so latent and so strange, that the meditator will oftentimes admire to see, how far the notions he is led to, are removed from those, which the first use of his meditation suggested.'⁵ And when he came to the 'moral' or the higher purpose to which this exercise in subtle concatenations was to lead, he took a much 'broader' view than Hall. He was 'ready to allow men's thoughts to expatiate much farther, and to make of the objects they contemplate not only a theological and a moral, but a political, and oeconomical or even a physical use'.⁶

¹ 'A Discourse touching Occasional Meditations' (1665), in *Works* (1744), ii.

² *Ibid.* 140.

³ *Ibid.* 143.

⁴ *Ibid.* 149.

⁵ *Ibid.* 161.

⁶ *Ibid.* 150-1.

Thus Boyle's contribution marks the secularization of the Meditation which eventually was to fit it to take its place in the literature of the eighteenth century. Many of the *Spectator* essays are Meditations, for instance. But if Boyle saw in which direction the Meditation was heading, he also perceived with considerable insight the essential nature of the pattern which Hall had laid down for its theme and rhetoric. Meditation-writing was

a faculty, whereby an inquisitive soul may expatiate itself through the whole immensity of the universe, and be ever her own teacher in a thousand cases, where the book is no less delightful than the lessons are instructive: A faculty (to conclude) by whose help the restless mind having dived to the lowermost parts of the earth, can thence in a trice take such a flight, that having traversed all the corporeal heavens, and scorned to suffer herself to be confined within the very limits of the world, she roves about in the ultra-mundane spaces, and considers how far they reach.¹

¹ *Works* (1744), ii. 153.

THE INFLUENCE OF TASSO AND DELLA CASA ON MILTON'S DICTION

By F. T. PRINCE

IN characterizing Milton's diction Dr. Johnson said that 'he had formed his style by a perverse and pedantic principle. He was desirous to use English words with a foreign idiom. . . . One source of his peculiarity was his familiarity with the Tuscan poets: the disposition of his words is, I think, frequently Italian; perhaps sometimes combined with other tongues.' It is the purpose of this article to show that Johnson's suggestion of a strong Italian influence on Milton's epic style is borne out by a closer examination; and to maintain that Tasso's criticism and Tasso's and della Casa's verse were the two chief Italian sources of Milton's 'uniform peculiarity of diction'.

I

There is no need to demonstrate that Milton's abstract or theoretic conception of the style suitable for epic poetry was that of the Italian critics of the sixteenth century, for this is one of the commonplaces of literary history. But it has never, I think, been shown how much Milton owed to the detailed practical instructions given by Italian critics for writers in their own language. Virgil was the master of the lofty style; Italian writers set out to discover by what means his verse could be imitated by poets writing in the vernacular. They descended to the minutest points in this type of inquiry, for Italian literature in the sixteenth century had become the object of criticism as scholarly as that devoted to ancient texts. Now it so happens that a detailed account of the methods the heroic poet should use to form the magnificent style is to be found in the biggest critical work of an author who is mentioned with great respect by Milton both as a critic and as an epic poet: it is in the Fifth Book of Tasso's *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*.¹

The *Del Poema Eroico* was Tasso's chief critical work: it was a revised and greatly expanded version of the three *Discorsi* of *L'Arte Poetica* written in the poet's youth. There can be little doubt that Milton intended both sets of *Discorsi* to be understood when he referred in the *Tractate of Education* to 'that sublime art which in Aristotle's Poetics, in Horace, and the Italian commentaries of Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws are of a Lyric, what decorum is, which is the grand masterpiece to observe'.

¹ The *Discorsi del Poema Eroico* were published in 1594; the *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica* had appeared in 1587. See Joseph Cottaz, *Le Tasse et la Conception Épique* (Paris, 1942).

Tasso is not a methodical critic, and the discussion of the 'magnificent' style in the Fifth Book of the *Del Poema Eroico* is not conducted with all the simplicity and order one could desire. But when it is sifted and analysed, the description of the epic style recommended by Tasso corresponds closely to Milton's style both in general character and in many details. The first principle of Milton's epic diction, that to which many of its other features may be referred, is his use of the long periodic sentence: 'the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another'. In Tasso's description of the magnificent style the first requisite given is 'the length of the phrases and of the periods, or clauses, whichever we choose to call them'.¹ One of Tasso's virtues as a critic is that he always illustrates his meaning by quotations, and he gives three examples of long sentences from Petrarch; two of these extend to eight lines, the third flows into a ninth.² But, just as in describing Milton's use of the long sentence, it is not sufficient to say that the sentence is not completed within a certain number of lines, but it must also be made clear that the sense is deliberately suspended for as long as possible; so Tasso's next point must be that in his three examples 'another cause of greatness is the sense, which remains suspended for so long'. And Tasso's simile for this effect is one of the commonplaces of his own criticism and that of other writers of the period on the magnificent style: 'for it is with the reader as with one who travels through lonely places, to whom the inn appears more distant as he sees the roads emptier and less frequented; but many halts and resting-places make even a long journey seem short'.³

Tasso's account of 'how to make the style great' consists of examples of how Italian poets have attained certain effects of complexity, drawing out the sentences, suspending the sense, departing from the natural word-order, and using metrical devices to stiffen and slow down the verse. The ideal of the style he describes is to be *difficult*; and the fact that many of Tasso's examples are drawn from Petrarch should not obscure for us the fact that Petrarch's style is not in its general character that which Tasso recommends. Petrarch's style is predominantly smooth and lucid, but Tasso chooses from him passages with some special effect of harshness, of severity or grandeur. And very soon in this exposition Tasso mentions the poet under whose influence his choice of 'magnificent' devices is made, and who indeed exercises a determining influence on Tasso's whole con-

¹ I have used the text of the *Discorsi* given in the *Opere di Torquato Tasso* (Pisa, 1823), xii. Translated extracts are from the Fifth Book of *Del Poema Eroico*, pp. 142-66.

² Petrarch, xxviii, ll. 76-83; cccxxxvii, ll. 1-8; cccxviii, ll. 1-9. These references are to Petrarch, *Il Canzoniere* (Hoepli, Milan, 1925).

³ The comparison is attributed to Dionysius of Halicarnassus. It is used again by Tasso in his lecture on della Casa's Sonnet LIX [printed in *Opere di Monsignor Giovanni della Casa* (Venice, 1728), i. 370].

ception of the lofty style in Italian. Recommending a certain harshness (*asprezza*) as 'a common cause of greatness and gravity', Tasso quotes examples from Petrarch and Dante of those collisions of open vowels which were avoided in Tuscan verse except for some special effect. 'All these things', he continues, 'are usually doubtless the means of producing the same effects: because the smooth and equable style may be more pleasing and sweeter to the ear, but it has no place in magnificence; therefore it was much avoided by Monsignor della Casa. As for that effect in Dante, I will not undertake to say whether it is from art or chance, but in any case both that effect and those of Petrarch are like one who stumbles, travelling by rough paths: but this roughness suggests I know not what magnificence and grandeur.'¹ It is thus by developing della Casa's manner that Tasso seeks to form a diction for heroic poetry, and this is an important clue to Milton's relationship to both della Casa and Tasso. The *Del Poema Eroico* chooses from the tradition of Tuscan poetry those effects which were preferred by della Casa and cultivated by him with such care that he introduced a new standard of grandeur into Italian verse.

Thus the next device which Tasso recommends for obtaining *asprezza* is 'the breaking up' of the verses so that they 'enter into one another'. Two examples are given from Petrarch, and Tasso says there are many others in Petrarch's sonnets, 'in many of Bembo, and many of Monsignor della Casa, but especially in this:

O sonno, o della queta umida ombrosa
Notte placido figlio. . .'

And he quotes the first eight lines of della Casa's 'Sonnet to Sleep', which has always been recognized as one of his most original achievements.² The poem is often used to illustrate della Casa's innovations; in the Venetian edition of his works published in 1728 the following comment on it is quoted: 'And what is most marvellous in him was that, finding everyone devoted to the imitation of Petrarch, he alone was the first to depart from this way, discovering an unfamiliar manner, no less full of novelty than of majesty; placing the pauses always in the middle of the lines, and keeping the reader suspended in delight and wonder.'³ The sense is indeed so 'variously drawn out from one verse into another' in this sonnet that only four of its lines end with the end of a sentence.

¹ The comparison of the traveller by rough roads is also used again by Tasso in his lecture on della Casa's Sonnet LIX; it is there attributed to Demetrius Phalerius (della Casa, *Opere*, i. 369).

² See J. S. Smart, *The Sonnets of Milton* (Glasgow, 1921), p. 31. Smart gives the Sonnet in full, remarking that 'something of the Miltonic movement and pause may be perceived' in it, 'as well as something of Miltonic dignity'.

³ Della Casa, *Opere* i. 247.

Tasso then gives various rhetorical devices which he considers useful to 'the magnificent writer'. All these devices are not relevant to the study of Milton's diction, but many of them were as applicable to English blank verse as to Tuscan poetry.¹ Tasso points out among other things that the repetition of conjunctions may 'lend force', and that their entire suppression may also 'make the expression great and magnificent', quoting as an example of both devices:

Cercar m'ha fatto deserti paesi,
Fiere e ladri rapaci, ispidi dumi,
Dure genti e costumi,
Et ogni error, che pellegrini intrica;
Monti, valli, paludi, e mari, e fiumi;
Mille lacciuoli in ogni parte tesi. . . .²

Such quotations are of great use in supplementing the somewhat vague terminology common in that period for analyses of grammar or rhetoric: and they are especially welcome when Tasso comes to such intricate 'figures' as Antipallage, which Tasso says 'one may call the mutation of cases'. The effect sought here and elsewhere is as usual one of difficulty or obscurity, for 'certainly in the mutation of cases, the more we remove ourselves from the common usage, the more noble and sublime the style becomes'. He gives here one or two examples of inversion of the natural word-order; 'beginning the verse with oblique cases usually has the same effect (*sc.* of grandeur) in the expression, which one may call *oblique* or *twisted*, as in those verses:

Del cibo, onde 'l signor mio sempre abbonda
Lacrime, e doglia, il cor lasso nudrisco'.³

It would, however, be unprofitable to catalogue all Tasso's rhetorical figures, for, as in all criticism of the period, no distinction is drawn between purely verbal devices and those which consist in imaginative departures from the common ways of thinking and perceiving. Thus the device of repetition of one word is followed by a digression on allegory, which 'has also something great'; and although Tasso apologizes for this and returns to his 'first topic', figures of speech, he proceeds to consider in close

¹ Thus Tasso speaks of double consonants in the rimes in Tuscan poetry; but there are traces even of this in the blank verse of *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato* (see below).

² Petrarch, CCCIX, ll. 46-51. Both diction and sense resemble Milton's:

Through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death.
(*P.L.* II, ll. 618-21.)

³ Petrarch, CCCXLII.

succession such things as 'reticence', epiphonema, 'gradation', personification, and metaphor. He comes back, however, to devices of wider application, which assumed very great importance in his own poetry and in that of Milton: 'the transposition of words', 'the disturbing of the natural order, placing those before which should be placed after', and hyperbaton, 'which we may call distraction or interposition'. The example he quotes of hyperbaton is one he had used at the beginning of his discussion to illustrate the long sentence, and it is a good quotation with which to conclude this summary:

Quel, che d'odore, e di color vincea
L'odorifero, e lucido Oriente,
Frutti, fiore, erbe e frondi, onde il Ponente
D'ogni rara eccellenza il pregio avea,
Dolce mio lauro. . .¹

Petrarch has here provided Tasso with a small compendium of the technical devices he preferred, most of which are to be found in a modified form in Milton. There is the suspension of the sense from the first line to the fifth by the relative clause beginning with *che*: *dolce mio lauro*, the subject of the sentence that is to come, is in apposition to *quel*. The adjective and the possessive pronoun in the phrase *dolce mio lauro* are inverted. The placing of *d'odore, e di color* before the verb *vincea* is an example of what Tasso calls 'oblique' or 'twisted' expression. The subordinate relative clause beginning with *onde* further suspends the sense, and is also an example of inverted word-order: the natural order would be *onde il Ponente avea il pregio d'ogni rara eccellenza*. Finally, there is in these lines a deliberate repeated collocation of open vowels which causes what Tasso admires as *asprezza*, and which we shall see becomes an element of prime importance in Milton's blank verse.

The importance of Tasso's *Discorsi del Poema Eroico* to the student of Milton does not lie only, or even mainly, in the detailed verbal parallels to Miltonic diction which are to be found in Tasso's examples, though these are sufficiently striking; it is in the fact that one finds there, among much that Milton might have found commonplace, a complete theory of an epic style of studied magnificence, which includes such technical features of Miltonic diction as the length of the sentences, the use of conjunctions and prepositions, the distortion of the word-order, and the use of open vowels in the prosody. Tasso pointed out the qualities in earlier Tuscan poetry which the epic poet should develop in pursuit of this style; he also indicated the sixteenth-century poet who had cultivated them most successfully—della Casa. Before investigating what Milton might have derived from Tasso's poetical practice, as opposed to his theory, it will be useful to see

¹ Petrarch, CCCXXXVII.

what he might have derived from della Casa, who had provided Tasso with his ideas concerning the 'magnificent' style in Italian.¹

II

Milton's copy of della Casa's *Rime et Prose* bears on the title-page the date 1629 in Milton's hand; but the bulk of Milton's sonnets, in which he directly and unmistakably follows della Casa, were written during the years of the Civil War and the Commonwealth. This suggests that during the period in which he was meditating his great epic Milton deliberately went to della Casa in order to experiment in the magnificent style he had in mind. He may have been sent to della Casa by Tasso, or by the knowledge that della Casa had contributed an example of unique value to Tasso; but in shaping in English the 'magnificent' style advocated by Tasso, Milton may well have found that della Casa's own concentrated poetry had as much to teach him as Tasso's development of it, which may be described not unfairly as a vulgarization. Della Casa was not only a more refined and original writer: his small collection of some seventy sonnets would be more easily analysed and echoed than Tasso's voluminous epic magnificence.

It is therefore relevant to describe della Casa's manner and the importance it evidently assumed in the opinion of the late sixteenth century. Tasso's own account of the style occurs partly in that section of the *Del Poema Eroico* which I have already summarized, and partly in a disquisition on della Casa's Sonnet LIX, which Milton may have read in early editions of Tasso's prose. It cannot be claimed, however, that Milton knew the document from which I am about to quote: it is a dialogue of uncertain authorship 'on the subject of Monsignor della Casa's style and how to imitate it'; it is entitled *Il Tasso*, for the exposition of how to imitate della Casa is put in the mouth of the Neapolitan poet.² Two things are apparent from the unknown author's treatment of the matter: one is that he knew Tasso's commentary on della Casa's Sonnet LIX, the other is that Tasso was considered to be an appropriate expositor of della Casa's style, presumably because he was recognized as himself an imitator of it.

Although Milton may never have met with this dialogue, *Il Tasso* is an interesting example of the kind of literary analysis he must have known in

¹ My attention has been drawn to the article by Professor Mario Praz on 'Milton and Poussin' in *Seventeenth Century Studies presented to Sir Herbert Grierson* (Oxford, 1938). Professor Praz points out that Tasso's theory in the *Discorsi* and his practice in *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato* (see below) closely anticipate Milton's epic style; but he does not provide a detailed analysis of the relationship.

² See della Casa, *Opere*, iii, *Aggiunta di Alcune Cose Appartenenti al Primo Tomo delle Opere di Mons. della Casa*, pp. 8-19. *Il Tasso* is not only of uncertain authorship but undated; but it seems to be, like much of the other critical material collected in this edition, of the late sixteenth century.

the Italian academies in 1638. Della Casa is first praised for his extreme polish (*gastigo*) and for the skill with which he exalts his subjects; for 'a writer's skill can appear in several ways: either in making that appear to be marvellous which is not so, or in clothing the subject so magnificently that it appears a great and excellent thing. None knew better how to do this than Mons. della Casa, for any trite and vulgar sentiment whatsoever is so ennobled by him that it comes to seem one of the most wonderful things that have ever been said.'¹ He exerted himself, in the manner of Virgil, 'to express by means of the quality of the verse the nature of the subject'. 'But', the analysis continues, 'the principal cause of the greatness and loftiness of his style I find in the wonderful skill he showed in breaking up the verses, and in separating the words which are commonly placed together.' These two devices are thus regarded as distinctive of della Casa's manner: the breaking up of the verses, or 'the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another'; and the distortion of the natural word-order, which we know as 'Miltonic inversions'. The writer proceeds to deal with each of these devices at some length.

'As for the breaking up of the verses', he says, 'it cannot be denied that this is the first cause of the elevated style.' Virgil's practice of it was imitated by Fracastoro and Sannazaro (in their Latin verse); Petrarch used it in his 'most serious sonnets'; Bembo introduced it into sixteenth-century Italian verse. Della Casa learnt it from Bembo; but 'in this he outwent not only Bembo, but any other of our poets'. Several sonnets of della Casa are cited in illustration, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus is quoted in this connexion as he was by Tasso.² The writer praises 'above all others' 'the most skilful transition in the sonnet *Cangiai con mio gran duolo contrada e parte*':

Signor fuggito più turbato aggiunge,
E chi dal giogo suo servo sicuro,
Prima partio, di ferro ebbe il cor cinto
Veracemente; e quegli anco fu duro,
Che visse un dì dalla sua Donna lunge,
E di sì grave duol non cadde vinto.³

The placing of *veracemente* and the strong pause which follows it are paralleled several times in the sestets of Milton's sonnets,⁴ and a similarly placed adverb comes to mind from *Paradise Lost*:

Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally. . . .⁵

¹ Op. cit. iii, *Aggiunta*, p. 11. All the translated quotations are from this source.

² See above, p. 223, n. 3.

⁴ See J. S. Smart, *The Sonnets of Milton*, pp. 31-3.

³ *Opere*, i. 8.

⁵ P.L. VIII, ll. 554-6.

The critic points out that the carrying over of the sense from one 'stanza' into another is familiar in 'the elegies of Catullus' and the odes of Horace.

The second of della Casa's chief distinctions, the distortion of the word-order, is then said to be 'the principal cause (if it be done with judgement) of magnificence in style'. In this, 'Monsignor della Casa certainly surpassed all others, and, making every effort to master this device, he so succeeded that his lofty style makes us feel something severe which is yet delightful, and something stiff which yet gives us pleasure'. 'For', the argument continues, 'if, as Quintilian said, that style is most serious and severe and ornate which most departs from the common, and is remote from the ordinary manner of speech, how much more will that be so, which takes as its first object the avoidance of the usual modes of speech?' Della Casa sought this effect in all his sonnets and *canzoni*, in which may be seen 'the infinite accuracy with which he breaks up the phrases, and, having divided them gracefully into several parts, places the words in the most agreeable position'. Five examples are given of such divided phrases, but it is clear to the reader of della Casa that the critic's chief difficulty must have been to choose from so many: the whole texture of the poet's verse is determined by its distortion of the natural word-order by one means or another. The examples given are of an extreme or forced division of phrases that is hardly possible in English owing to the lack of inflections.

Aspro costume in bella Donna e rio¹

or

Rigido già di bella Donna aspetto²

could not be reproduced in a language in which adjectives did not agree in gender and number with their substantives. Milton cannot but apply this device less boldly:

Ere half my days in this dark world *and wide*³

and

What neat repast shall feast us, *light and choice*,
Of Attic taste, with wine . . .⁴

and

the gathered beach
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep *high-arched*⁵

show that he could use this separation of the adjective from its substantive only when the sense made the reference clear.

What our Italian author next says, however, about this distortion of the word-order indicates why the lack of inflections in English did not prevent

¹ Sonetto III, *Opere*, i. 2.

² Canzone 1, op. cit., p. 18.

³ 'On his Blindness.'

⁴ 'To Mr. Lawrence.'

⁵ *P.L.* x, ll. 299-301.

Milton from obtaining in the end an equivalent effect. The second person of the dialogue objects at this point that Latin is capable of much hyperbaton and can therefore be exploited in this way, but that Italian 'admits only a slight transposition, such as we read in the Decameron of Boccaccio, and in Monsignor Bembo's prose'. The reply to this objection is ingenious but convincing. It has already been agreed, says the critic, that a style becomes more elevated as it departs further from common speech: 'if in order to attain this end in our language it is sufficient to transpose the words but moderately (since transposition is not so frequent as it is in Latin), why will you not agree that the style of some Tuscan author may be as elegant in this respect with a slight transposition of words, as the style of Latin authors is with a greater degree of transposition?'

Milton was certainly capable for his own part of such reasoning as this. If English allowed less freedom of word-order than Italian, for that very reason a small degree of distortion would be as effective in the one language as a greater in the other. The value of della Casa's poetry to Milton was that it showed him how, in a modern European language which was, like English, less highly inflected than Greek or Latin, it was nevertheless possible to rival the complex word-order of Virgil or Horace. But, since Milton's primary object was this rivalry of the classics, it has been possible to overlook the exact nature of his debt to an Italian poet whose complete poetical works consist only of some seventy sonnets and *canzoni*, and who, for all the concentrated beauty of his style, has never been considered one of the major poets of his country.

III

Tasso wrote his *Discorsi*, he tells us, for his own instruction;¹ and the magnificent diction he advocated was what he himself attempted in his heroic poems. Milton's high opinion of Tasso's poetry is clear from several well-known references: Tasso was indeed the only poet of modern Europe to be placed by Milton in the company of Homer and Virgil.² Yet there is no obvious affinity between Milton's epic and the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, unless it lies in the note of high Christian endeavour apparent in them both. Milton's opinion of Tasso can only be understood, I think, when one estimates Milton's debt to Tasso's critical writings, to his experiments in diction, and, in particular to the long poem of Tasso's last years, *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato*.

Tasso's manner in the *Gerusalemme Liberata* was recognized to be as personal as that of della Casa had been in lyrical poetry; but it roused far

¹ 'E scrissi i miei Discorsi per ammaestramento di me stesso . . .', *Opere*, x. 249.

² In *The Reason of Church Government*.

more discussion and opposition. The controversies roused by the *Gerusalemme Liberata* were not mainly concerned with that feature which concerns us now, the diction; this was but one debatable aspect of the poem in the eyes of contemporaries, and the chief matters discussed were those of the general conception and conduct, all those questions of the metaphysics of the heroic poem which make such dreary reading to-day.

Of the hostile critics Galileo is to-day the most interesting, partly because he took no part in the public controversy, and did not write in the interest of a critical dogma or policy.¹ He does not concern himself with critical superstitions or abstractions, and his final estimate of Tasso's genius and style is perhaps the most illuminating of contemporary judgements. He places it at the head of his comments, in the form of a well-known comparison: 'One defect is especially common in Tasso', he says, 'as a result of a great lack of invention and a poverty of ideas: it is that, as he is often short of matter, he is forced to proceed by piecing together ideas having no dependence on or connection with one another; whence his narrative appears to be more often like a picture in inlaid woodwork (*intarsiata*) than in oil colours. For inlaid work (*tarsie*), being a placing together of little pieces of diverse colours, which cannot be joined together or combined so smoothly that their edges do not remain sharp and harshly distinct (because of the difference in colour), necessarily makes the patterns dry and crude, without fulness or relief.'²

This 'inlaid' style is exposed in all its weaknesses by Galileo's lively mind. He points with especial contempt to Tasso's inverted and contorted figures of speech, commenting on the following two lines:

Di Colei, che sua diva e madre face
Quel volgo, del suo Dio nato e sepolto . . .³

'Did you ever in your life see such a stiffness (*durezza*) as in these two lines, and such a suspension of the mind as is needed to rearrange the words, so that their sense and construction can be understood? But the great pedant clings to this anchor, that *verba transposita non mutant sensum*, and takes no account of the dangers; indeed, the greater the obscurity, the more beautiful the artifice appears in his eyes. And this is because his mind goes no further than to find the construction of the sentence, and he cannot believe that these things are not skilful, but the miserable strainings of people who are trying to do what they are not fitted to do: for anyone can speak obscurely, but very few with clarity.'⁴ Galileo condemns the use in

¹ Galileo's *Considerazioni sulla Gerusalemme Liberata* remained in manuscript until 1793. They are reported to have been written when he was a young man of 26. The *Considerazioni* are printed in Tasso, *Opere*, xxiii.

² Ibid. p. 133.

⁴ Tasso, *Opere*, xxiii. 143.

³ *Ger. Lib.*, Canto II, st. v.

narrative verse of the intricate rhetorical figures recommended by Tasso in *Del Poema Eroico* and applied lavishly in the *Gerusalemme Liberata*: 'Such conceits', he says, 'can only be tolerated on two conditions: the one, that they are carried out with the greatest skill, so that their charm surpasses their affectation; the other, that they are in a detached poem, a poem finished in itself, such as a sonnet or a madrigal, which is all of the same texture: but in a continued narration they have no place. . . .' For we may take pleasure in various 'figures' in a ballet or a dancing-school: 'but on the other hand it would seem highly unsuitable if a gentleman on his way to church or to the law-courts were to change his pace every hundred yards or so by cutting one or two capers, leaping into the air, and then proceeding on his journey'.¹

Milton would not have been confirmed in his high opinion of Tasso by his meeting with Galileo in 1638; but Galileo's views are useful as showing how experimental Tasso's style was recognized to be, and how different from that of Ariosto, with whom Galileo constantly compares him to his disadvantage. Other critics saw no profit in judging the two poets by the same standards. 'In my opinion', said Orazio Ariosto, 'all that will ever be said in comparing the diction and style of Tasso with those of Ariosto will be futile, and a reasoning fruitlessly in circles: for in this respect they have taken paths not only divergent but almost opposite to each other; Ariosto having chosen to use the character or idea of the style called *lucid* by Hermogenes, and Tasso having in his mind's eye the idea or form of the magnificent style.'²

The *Gerusalemme Liberata* attempted to combine the substance of the Italian romantic epics with the lofty style based on Virgil, and it is not surprising that it did not wholly succeed. The *ottava rima* was not a suitable instrument for the desired effect of sustained stiffness, weight, and richness: its great virtues as a vehicle of narrative poetry were its swiftness and clarity, and the regularly renewed liveliness made possible by the concluding couplet. Tasso's verbal elaboration destroys most of these qualities. Moreover, while he loses the advantages proper to the form, the 'magnificent' style he desires cannot be developed fully within its limits. For the stanza itself imposes a movement and a pattern which do not allow the sense to be 'variously drawn out from one verse into another'; and an intricate word-order is not only structurally unnecessary (since the stanza is held together by the rimes), but becomes positively tiresome.

¹ Tasso, *Opere*, xxiii. 146.

² Ibid. x. 244. Orazio Ariosto's summary of the magnificent style contains all the usual features: 'The great and magnificent style, if we are to believe Hermogenes, Demetrius, and Aristotle himself, requires thoughts or conceits (whichever we call them) high and illustrious, sought out with care, elaborated and almost, as it were, violent. . . . Its verse is not slack or soft, but has at first sight a certain roughness. . . .'

Yet much of the poem nevertheless gives an impression of sustained grandeur. The description of God looking down from Heaven on the Crusaders approaching Jerusalem is a good example of the complex word-order and of Tasso's effort to draw out his sentences (which here overflow the limits of the stanza):

Sedeà colà, dond' egli e buono e giusto
 Dà legge al tutto, e 'l tutto orna e produce
 Sovra i bassi confin del mondo angusto,
 Ove senso e ragion non si conduce;
 E de la eternità nel trono angusto
 Risplendea con tre lumi in una luce.
 Ha sotto i piedi il Fato e la Natura,
 Ministri umili, e il Moto e Chi 'l misura,

E 'l Loco, e Quella che, qual fumo o polve,
 La gloria di qua giuso e l'oro e i regni,
 Come piace là su disperde e volve,
 Nè, diva, cura i nostri umani sdegni.
 Quivi ei così nel suo splendor s'involva,
 Che v'abbaglian la vista anco i più degni:
 D'intorno ha innumerabili immortali,
 Disegualmente in lor letizia eguali.¹

When the vagueness and obscurity of the expression have been penetrated, there appears in these verses a series of statements sometimes unrelated logically to one another—the fault indicated by Galileo's adjective 'inlaid'; the abrupt transition from one such statement to another is, however, in part due to Tasso's ideal of difficulty, *asprezza*, in the general effect. On the whole the poet relies more on the sound of his words than on their sense, and here again he seeks *asprezza*: the most obvious verbal device used for this purpose in the above lines is the repeated collocation of open vowels recommended in the *Del Poema Eroico*.

When one compares the diction of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* with that of *Paradise Lost* one is struck by a constant affinity in the details of phraseology, and one has the same sense of the poet's deliberate effort, the raised pitch of his verse; but Tasso's lyrical conceits and the movement of the *ottava rima* (to which they are related) render the total impression very different from that of Milton's blank verse. It is in Tasso's last long poem, *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato*, written when he was living at Naples under the patronage of Manso, that one finds a really close anticipation of Miltonic diction. Here Tasso threw off the constraints of rime and the requirements of chivalrous romance, which had failed to combine happily

¹ *Ger. Lib.*, Canto IX, st. 56-7.

with the lofty style he sought. He was free at last to unfold in *versi sciolti* the magnificent diction originally inspired by della Casa and described in the *Del Poema Eroico*. The result is a poem of 8,000 lines which shows that Milton in *Paradise Lost* adapted to English a blank verse diction devised in Italy three generations before.

The basic principles of Tasso's blank verse are those which Milton was to make his own: 'the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another' and the distortion of the natural word-order, both of which here assume their full structural value. Any passage chosen at random from the poem will show how they operate. But before quoting from *Le Sette Giornate* I want to point out two verbal devices which are prominent in these *versi sciolti*. One of them is not to be paralleled in Milton's blank verse, the other is highly relevant to it: but both illustrate Tasso's unswerving pursuit of 'magnificence'. The first is the use of double consonants in the end-words of the lines. In *Del Poema Eroico* Tasso wrote that 'beyond all other things which cause magnificence in Tuscan poetry is the sound or, so to speak, the clamour, of the double consonants, which strike the ears in the last place of the verse'.¹ He quoted an example from Petrarch:

Mentre, che 'l cor dagli amorosi vermi
Fu consumato, e 'n fiamma amorosa arse,
Di vaga fera le vestigia sparse
Cercai per poggi solitari ed ermi. . . .²

Now in the blank verse of *Le Sette Giornate* there is an evident effort to end the lines on words of this kind, giving an energetic, somewhat harsh, resonance. Of the 664 lines of the *Giornata Prima*, 496 conclude with words containing these double consonants; and this helps to produce a sustained sonority not found in, for example, the blank verse of Annibal Caro's translation of Virgil. The device is not, of course, applicable in English. But Tasso's predilection for these double consonants shows that he was still faithfully following the methods laid down in *Del Poema Eroico*.

The second verbal device which determines the character of this blank verse is also laid down in that treatise, but is of greater importance; it is indeed the first cause of *asprezza* which Tasso mentions. This is the deliberate placing together of open vowels which is equally noticeable in the diction of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*.³ Milton's treatment, or use, of open vowels in the blank verse of *Paradise Lost* is recognized to distinguish it from all previous blank verse in English, whether written by Milton or by other poets. It seems to be an adaptation of this Italian practice, introduced by Milton into his heroic verse for precisely the same reasons

¹ *Opere*, xii. 146.

² Petrarch, ccciv.

³ See above, p. 230.

that led Tasso to exploit it. Milton had evidently accepted Tasso's opinion, confirmed by his own ear, on the 'magnificence' to be derived from this form of *asprezza*; within the limits imposed by the English language he makes it one of the structural principles of his verse.¹

Such devices as these to obtain a sustained weight and sonority, a free development of long sentences and a complex word-order: these are the principles of Tasso's blank verse diction. Milton adopted them all, together with many tricks of phrase due to his, and Tasso's, 'familiarity with the Tuscan poets'.² It is difficult to choose from so long a poem, written in so uniform, indeed so monotonous, a manner, passages which bear a particular resemblance to passages in Milton: yet one need only read a page of Tasso's poem to perceive that the relationship exists. Two quotations may serve to bring it out, and also to indicate its general character: Milton had so assimilated the methods and standards of this Italian 'magnificence' that he could recreate it freely in English and use it for what purpose he would. The first 77 lines of *Le Sette Giornate* are an invocation to the Holy Ghost to inspire the poet's song:

Divino Amore,
Tu dal Padre, e dal Figlio in me discendi,
E nel mio core alberga, e quindi, e quindi
Porta le grazie, e 'nspira i sensi e i carmi,
Perch' io canti quel primo, alto lavoro,
Ch'è da voi fatto, e fuor di voi risplende
Maraviglioso; e 'l magistero adorno
Di questo allor di voi creato mondo,
In sei giorni distinto. . . .³

Tasso's vision of the Last Judgement in the *Giornata Settima* also provides a passage of quotable length:

Là dispensate fian corone e palme
A' gloriosi, e seggi alti lucenti.
E quei, che guerreggiaro in lunga guerra,
Quant' è la vita de' mortali erranti
Sovra la terra, e riportar vincendo
Dal nemico Satanno in duro campo

¹ Bridges emphasizes the inadequacy of the term 'elision' to Milton's treatment of open vowels [*Milton's Prosody* (Oxford, 1893), Appendix B].

² Tasso has some curious instances of playing upon words:

Ma delle *piante* ancor chi tace 'l *pianto*? (*Giornata Terza, Opere*, xxvii. 98);

Altri son della mano a 'vezzi *avvezzi* (*Giornata Quinta*, *ibid.*, p. 168).

These are similar in effect to Milton's

Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall

and

Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought.

³ *Opere*, xxvii. 3.

Mille vittoriose e sacre spoglie;
 Lassù vedransi trionfando a schiera
 Nel gran trionfo eterno, e 'l gran vessillo
 Coronati seguir del Re possente
 Degli altri Regi. E la divina destra
 In quel d'eternità lucido tempio,
 Onde precipitando Angel rubello
 Cadde, sospenderà le spoglie eccelse,
 E i trofei della Croce.¹

Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato is not a great poem: Tasso had not the power to wield the style he had evolved. His handling of the theme of the Creation is without system or clarity. Long and rich, but vague, descriptions are mixed with moral platitudes and undigested natural history. The scientific survey of the universe is reminiscent of the *De Rerum Natura*, but introduces the prosy or quaint piety of medieval treatises. Both the diction and the poet's intellectual mediocrity lead him to say too much on every subject. He may achieve passages of impressive splendour, but usually blurs their effect by adding connected reflections.²

To claim that Milton's debt is clear is not, therefore, to suggest that he did not better his instructions. For this explanations may be found, but some of them explain very little. Thus it is true to say that Milton had a great poetic imagination and a disciplined intellectual power which Tasso lacked, and that he could so support and animate the weighty and elaborate style as Tasso could not. But this is merely a description of the fact; for there is no explanation of Milton's superior power. One factor in Milton's success may nevertheless be discerned: seventeenth-century English had fresher and richer resources, was in closer and healthier relation to contemporary life, than was sixteenth-century literary Italian. Although Milton desired 'to use English words in a foreign idiom' and to remove his diction from the usages of common speech, he drew upon the free luxuriance of the Elizabethans. But poets in Italy in the sixteenth century, whether they themselves spoke Tuscan or not, had to write in the dialect of Dante and Petrarch; and this literary language, which had been fresh two centuries before, had in their own time become artificially refined and codified.

¹ *Opere*, xxvii. 269-70.

² Thus in the *Giornata Terza* he concludes the description of the newly created sea with the following effective picture:

Ma da qual alto, e'n mar pendente scoglio
 E da quel più sublime eccelsa rupe;
 Da qual sommo di monte alpestre giogo,
 Che signoreggia d' ambe parti il mare,
 Vedrò la sua beltà sì chiaro e tanto,
 Quant' ella innanzi al suo Fattor s'offerse?

But he adds two pious glosses of similar length which dissipate the impression (*ibid.*, p. 79).

MRS. MONTAGU AND THE CLIMBING-BOYS

By GEORGE L. PHILLIPS

Ah! drop a tear, for MONTAGUE's no more,
To spread for craving sweeps the May-day store.¹

MRS. Elizabeth Montagu's wit and taste may have won for her the title of 'Queen of the Blues', but she was almost equally celebrated for her generosity and kindness to the London 'climbing-boys'. Deploring the hardships resulting from their occupation of sweeping chimneys, Mrs. Montagu determined to give the London chimney-sweepers' apprentices at least one happy day every year by entertaining them on May Day in the grounds of her mansion in Portman Square. The public, unaccustomed to such charity for young sweeps, spread a rumour that the annual celebration was an expression of thanksgiving for the safe return of her son and heir, rescued from climbing flues. The fanciful tale was still being told long after the Montagu family had moved out of the great house in Portman Square.

The first reference to Mrs. Montagu's regaling Lamb's 'dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses' appears in a letter which Hannah More wrote her sister in 1793:

I was invited to dine in Portman-square with the chimney-sweepers on May-day, a feast I should have liked much had I been well enough.²

This statement implies that 1793 was not the first year that the climbing-boys were invited to Montagu House; yet just when, after moving into her newly constructed house in 1781, Mrs. Montagu began the May Day festivities is uncertain.³ At all events, her hospitality was so generally known by 1 May 1799 that *The Times* noted on that day:

¹ J. Cobbin, 'Philanthropy; A Poem', printed in *The Chimney-Sweeper's Friend, and Climbing-Boy's Album*, arranged by James Montgomery (London, 1842), p. 341.

² *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More* (New York, 1851), i. 436.

³ Ashton is not clear whether Mrs. Montagu's interest in the climbing-boys began before the publication of Jonas Hanway's *The State of Chimney-Sweepers' Young Apprentices* (London, 1773) or after: 'He [Jonas Hanway] could not even leave to Mrs. Elizabeth Montague of the "Blue-Stocking Club" notoriety, her championship and patronage of the poor little climbing boys—and he fired off a pamphlet on "The State of Chimney-Sweepers' Young Apprentices, &c." ' [John Ashton, *Eighteenth Century Waifs* (London, 1887), p. 275]. Probably, however, Mrs. Montagu's May Day parties for the young boys commenced after 1784 since, on 28 November of that year, Horace Walpole wrote to General Conway: 'Humanity is no match for cruelty. There are now and then such angelic beings as Mr. Hanway and Mr. Howard; but our race in general is pestilently bad and malevolent. I have been these two years wishing to promote my excellent friend Mr. Porter's plan for alleviating the woes of chimney-sweepers, but could never make impression on three people . . .' [*Letters of Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Oxford* (London, 1891),

This being the first day of May, Mrs. Montague will give her annual entertainment of roast beef, and plum-pudding, to the Chimney-sweepers of the Metropolis, in the courtyard of her house in Portman Square.

Her death the following March terminated the feasting and frolicking¹ which had so delighted the young sweeps, who mourned her passing in such lines as

Though I'm only a sweep,
Yet allow me to weep
And with sorrow my loss to deplore,
While the shovel and brush
Are now totally hush'd
Since the Patron of Sweeps is no more.²

The long tables, set up temporarily in the courtyard of Montagu House, were loaded with the 'roasted beef, and the pulpy softness of those puddings of plums' so rhapsodically described by Fanny Burney.³ Reginald Blunt added mutton;⁴ and William Hone, mantling beer.⁵ After the feast, the boys danced on the lawns until such time as a few acrobats appeared to entertain them.⁶ Before his departure, each guest received a sum of money to help keep his memory of the day especially pleasant.⁷

Early on May Day morning the 'jetty objects' of Mrs. Montagu's bounty⁸ underwent the dangerous ordeal of bathing.⁹ Then they put on their best suits, usually festooned with shoulder-knots of bright-hued streamers, pranced in processions led by the Lord, Lady, and Jack-in-the-Green

viii. 527]. If Mrs. Montagu's kindness to the young chimney-sweepers had been well known in 1784, it is likely that Walpole would have placed her in the celestial category with Hanway and Porter.

¹ In commemoration of which the climbing-boys danced in front of Montagu House every May Day long after Mrs. Montagu's death [Grace and Philip Wharton, *The Queens of Society* (London, n.d.), ii. 259].

² *The Times*, 22 March 1934. Contributed by Reginald Blunt.

³ Frances D'Arblay [Frances Burney], *Memoirs of Dr. Burney* (London, 1832), ii. 272.

⁴ Reginald Blunt, *Mrs. Montagu 'Queen of the Blues' Her Letters and Friendships from 1762 to 1800* (London, n.d.), ii. 346.

⁵ *The Every-Day Book; or Everlasting Calendar of Popular Amusements*, ed. by William Hone (London, 1827), ii. 624.

⁶ T. Hosmer Shepherd's water-colour of May Day frolicking at Montagu House appears in Ethel R. Wheeler's *Famous Blue-Stockings* (New York, 1910), p. 327.

⁷ *The Every-Day Book* (London, 1826), i. 591. Charles Dickens changes the 'mantling beer' to porter and reduces the shilling, cited by Hone, to sixpence. 'The First of May', *Sketches by Box* (Boston, n.d.), p. 180.

⁸ So described by Fanny Burney.

⁹ David Porter hesitated about apprenticing a climbing-boy to a second trade in his free time, for 'though his leisure hours are sufficient for other employment, yet he cannot be fit for these without being washed all over; and whether such immersion daily repeated would not occasion greater evils than he at present labours under, I am not physician enough to determine', *Considerations of the Present State of Chimney Sweepers* (London, 1792), p. 31.

through the streets to the accompaniment of thundering drums and of soot-brushes dashed against chimney-scrappers. When the iron gates of Montagu House opened, they doffed their streamers and in sober garb, with the tools of their trade as entrance tickets, entered the grounds of their benevolent patroness.

The hour when the boys were invited to dine is uncertain. Some verses in *The Every-Day Book* (1827),¹ a casual phrase of Fanny Burney,² and a statement in the *D.N.B.*³ ascribe May Day morning in general; yet Dickens fixed the hour as half-past one o'clock,⁴ and Blunt⁵ and Busse⁶ set down an inclusive one to four o'clock limit.

But whether the celebration was in the morning or in the afternoon, the climbing-boys ate heartily and played merrily. One writer, mourning the passing of Mrs. Montagu, recounted how, through her kindness, the boys looked on their one holiday of the year:

Washed was his little form, his shirt was clean,
On that *one* day his real face was seen,
His shoeless feet, now *boasted* pumps—and new.
The brush and shovel gaily held in view!
The table spread, his every sense was charmed,
And every savoury smell his bosom warmed;
His light heart joyed to see such goodly cheer,
And much he longed to taste the mantling beer;
His hunger o'er—the scene was little heaven.⁷

It is not what Mrs. Montagu fed the sweep-boys on but the fact that she bothered to feed them that makes her connexion with them interesting. To be sure, such men as Jonas Hanway, David Porter, and Thomas Bernard sought through legislation and friendly societies to alleviate the miseries of the climbing-boys;⁸ Mrs. Montagu, on the other hand, made her philanthropy a personal matter. Even though humanitarianism was spreading as the eighteenth century drew near its end, such directly active participation in the climbing-boys' holiday festivities was remarked by the public with astonishment. Ashton, after pointing out that Mrs. Montagu's conduct was contrary to the general spirit of the age that could see nothing

¹ Op. cit., ii. 312-13.

³ (Oxford, 1922), xiii. 69

⁵ Blunt, op. cit. ii. 346.

⁶ John Busse, *Mrs. Montague Queen of the Blues* (London, 1928), p. 46.

⁷ Hone, op. cit., ii. 624.

⁸ For further information on this subject, see the author's *England's Climbing-Boys: A History of the Long Struggle to Abolish Child Labor in Chimney Sweeping*, a monograph, published by Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration (Boston, Mass., 1949).

² Mme D'Arblay, op. cit.

⁴ Dickens, op. cit., p. 180.

more in a climbing-boy than a lad being forced to climb flues for his own good, and for that of the community, claimed:

a web of romance had to be woven around her, in order to account for it. It was rumoured, and credibly believed, that she had lost a son, and found him again as a 'climbing-boy'; and, to mark her sense of gratitude for his restoration, she feasted all the boys in London on the sweeps' holiday—May-day. Of course, there is not an atom of foundation for such a story, but practical philanthropy was then so unusual, that a reason had to be found for its observance.¹

The Times, attributing Mrs. Montagu's philanthropy to gratitude for having found her son among the chimney-sweepers,² later denied the story, stating that her donations proceeded from 'pure benevolence towards the distressed poor'.³ This public denial, however, did not check the growth of the legend. Almost a century after Mrs. Montagu's death, an article in *Folk-Lore* told how a Mr. Ames, an elderly chimney-sweeper, had informed the author that his father, also a chimney-sweeper, had heard, when he was a boy, of a lady who had once upon a time discovered her lost son following the trade of sweeping chimneys. She had rescued the lad and proceeded to celebrate his return by entertaining all the climbing-boys in London on May Day.⁴ Another version of the story appeared in 1911:

About the middle of the Eighteenth Century, a little boy between three and four years of age was lost in London (he was of noble birth) by his nurse. It was supposed he was kidnapped for his fine clothes. Search was made, but no tidings could be obtained of his whereabouts. Some years afterwards a little boy of between eight and nine years of age was put to sweep a chimney upon the first of May at a gentleman's house in London. After he had come down the chimney he saw a picture of his mother hanging in the room against the wall. The people of the house came in and found him crying. He told them it was the picture of his mother whom he had lost. They at once recognized that he was their lost child. That is why the sweeps used formerly in most towns of England to make a holiday of the first of May, dressing up in coloured paper and linen, and with dancing and gala processions through the streets.⁵

Less fanciful and more factual than these stories, based on rumour, were the numerous accounts of children, kidnapped by disreputable persons and sold to flint-hearted chimney-sweepers, that appeared in newspapers, periodicals, and parliamentary reports⁶ between the time of Mrs. Montagu's

¹ John Ashton, *The Dawn of the XIXth Century in England. A Social Sketch of the Times* (London, 1886), i. 279.

² *The Times*, 1 May 1799.

³ *Ibid.*, 2 May 1799.

⁴ *Folk-Lore*, iv (March 1893), 53.

⁵ *Notes and Queries Concerning Evesham and the Four Shires*, ed. E. A. B. Barnard (Evesham, 1911), i. 198.

⁶ A detailed statement of stealing children may be found in the *Report from the Committee of the Honourable the House of Commons on the Employment of Boys in Sweeping of*

death in 1800 and the publication of Lamb's well-known 'Praise of Chimney Sweepers' in the May issue of the *London Magazine* for 1822. Lamb definitely associated Mrs. Montagu with one lost-and-found story when he wrote of

many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days . . . the tales of the fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless defiliations.¹

As Lucas pointed out, Lamb was indulging in romantic day-dreaming when he made Mrs. Montagu the 'defiliated' mother and placed the boy between the spotless sheets of the ducal bed at Arundel Castle.²

Dickens, in 1837, moved the bed from Arundel Castle to a London town-house—he does not call it Montagu House—and attributed the annual celebration to the mother's feeling of gratitude in finding her son:

A mystery hung over the sweeps in those days. Legends were in existence of wealthy gentlemen who had lost children, and who, after many years of sorrow and suffering, had found them in the character of sweeps. Stories were related of a young boy who, having been stolen from his parents in his infancy, and devoted to the occupation of chimney sweeping, was sent, in the course of his professional career, to sweep the chimney in his mother's bedroom; and how, being hot and tired when he came out of the chimney, he got into the bed he had so often slept in as an infant, and was discovered and recognized therein by his mother, who once every year of her life, thereafter, requested the pleasure of the company of every London sweep, at half-past one o'clock, to roast beef, plum-pudding, porter, and sixpence.³

Writing on the trade of chimney-sweeping in 1851, Henry Mayhew related the Montagu story as based on fact. He declared that Mrs. Montagu, a widow, lost her only son and some years later discovered him in the very bed that he had occupied before he had been stolen. She at once 'restored him to his rank in society', and then

in order the better to commemorate this singular restoration, and the fact of his having been a climbing-boy . . . annually provided an entertainment on the 1st of May, at White Conduit House, for all the climbing-boys of London.⁴

Chimneys; together with the Minutes of the Evidence Taken before the Committee, 23 June 1817.

¹ Charles Lamb, 'The Praise of Chimney Sweepers', *Essays of Elia* (Everyman's Library), pp. 130-1.

² E. V. Lucas, *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (London, 1903-5), ii. 382.

³ Dickens, op. cit., p. 180.

⁴ Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work, Those That Cannot Work, and Those That Will Not Work* (London, 1851), ii. 371. Mayhew cites three versions of the Montagu story but prefers Lamb's account because at Arundel Castle the bed wherein the child was discovered was shown to visitors 'nor is it likely that in such a place the story of the ducal bed

In the twentieth century the Montagu legend shifts from the discovery of a son and heir to a relative's child. For instance, *The Times*, on 9 March 1920, declared that besides entertaining the wealthy and learned, Mrs. Montagu

used every May Day to give a party to chimney-sweepers. It is said, but probably without justification, that the sweeps were invited by her to celebrate the fortunate and accidental recovery of a relative's child, who had been kidnapped and put to the dreadful business of chimney-climbing.

On 15 March 1934 *The Times*, in referring to Mrs. Montagu's interest in the climbing-boys, recalled

a legend that the sweeps' holiday arose from the kidnapping of a child of the Montagu family who became a sweep, and one day found himself in a room of the very house from which he had been stolen and which he clearly remembered.

Thus the legend, connecting the first mistress of Montagu House with the climbing-boys through the discovery of her son, or of a relative's son, sweeping flues with them, has lingered for a century and a half despite the facts and figures proving the impossibility of such an event having taken place. Protected by such safeguarding phrases as 'stories were related', 'probably without justification', 'there is a legend', 'such is the account given', the romantic charm of the fable stimulated the fanciful imaginations of Lamb and Dickens.

Upon which member of the Montagu family was the rumour based? Of the two claimants,¹ Mrs. Montagu's son and her cousin Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's son, there would appear to be no argument for the former, who died in infancy in 1744. Consequently, the role of the restored climbing-boy fell to eccentric Edward Wortley Montagu, Junior. Edward was the sort of boy to attract legends. He was the first English boy to be inoculated for small-pox; he was constantly running away from school and being advertised for in the newspapers; he was arrested in Paris for cheating at cards; he wrote learned papers for the Royal Society; he astonished London Society by displaying his wig of fine iron strands resembling hair. He changed religions as he changed wives, several times; he professed to follow the doctrines of the Church of England, the Church of Rome, and Mohammedanism, and he married English, Irish, and Nubian girls without, however, bothering about securing divorces. During the course of a life in

and the little climbing-boy would be *invented* ('ibid. ii. 372). Mayhew appears to be the only person to place the banquet at the White Conduit House.

¹ Matthew Montagu, nephew and heir of Mrs. Montagu who showed an interest in the climbing-boys by donating money and time to their cause, apparently was never considered as an aspirant to the dubious honour of being a chimney-sweeper's apprentice. As a business man he managed his aunt's large fortune and as a devoted husband fathered ten children in as many years.

which he out-rivalled Trelawney, he served a brief time in the services of a master chimney-sweeper.¹

According to his anonymous biographer,² Edward Wortley Montagu, Junior, exchanged clothes with a climbing-boy to escape the stern authorities of his private school and proceeded to work for a good-natured chimney-sweeper. His puckish spirits led him to perpetrate several pranks. One day he descended a flue opening into a chamber where a covey of gamesters was fleecing a country gull. Black as Satan's own footman and reeking with the foul odour of soot, Edward stated that he had been sent to fetch the gamesters to his master. They fled conscience-stricken, and Edward stuffed the bank-notes into his pockets before returning up the chimney to safety. On another occasion, tired out by his work and indifferent lodgings, he flung himself between the clean sheets of an imposing bed and fell asleep. Upon awakening, he observed a maid stealing some sweetmeats from her mistress's cupboard. Indignantly, he stood up and silently pointed his dirty finger at the terrified girl who, believing him to be from Hell, fainted. Edward, thereupon, hastily climbed the flue leaving some ashes in the bed and a foul stench. The girl, upon regaining consciousness, believed that she had narrowly missed the Devil's henchman and confessed her theft to her mistress.

Against his wishes, Edward was forced to leave the chimney-sweeping trade when, being suspected of theft as he tried to pawn a gold watch, he was turned over to the school authorities by the magistrate before whom he was tried.³

It has been suggested that Edward's frolic as a climbing-boy served as the reason for the celebration held yearly at the mansion of his distant cousin, Mrs. Montagu. This view cannot be accepted for the following reasons:

1. Edward was not kidnapped and forced to climb flues. He deliberately ran

¹ Citing this boyhood experience of young Montagu as a climbing-boy are the following references:

- (a) *The Annual Register for 1776* (London, 1788), xix. 34.
- (b) *The Life, Travels and Adventures of Edward Wortley Montagu, Esq. Son to the Most Famous Traveller Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Exhibiting His very Extraordinary Transactions in England, France, Italy, Turkey, Arabia, Egypt, and the Holy Land: with Remarks on the Manners, and Customs of the Oriental World* (Boston, [1784]), 2 vols., i. 15-23.
- (c) [Edward Vaughan Hyde Kenealy] *Edward Wortley Montagu. An Autobiography* (London, 1860), i. 199-209.
- (d) *The New Biographical Dictionary* (Philadelphia, 1899).
- (e) *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, ii. 382.
- (f) Morris Bishop, *A Gallery of Eccentrics* (New York, 1928), p. 178.

² *Life, Travels and Adventures*.

³ Similar adventures are recorded in *Edward Wortley Montagu. An Autobiography*, op. cit.

away from school and chose the disguise of climbing-boy as a protection from school authorities and maternal spies.

2. None of Mrs. Montagu's close friends, nor, it is believed, any of her biographers have stated that her May Day parties for climbing-boys were to commemorate Edward's return to polite society.
3. Mrs. Montagu did not meet Edward, her senior by seven years, until he had established his reputation as a 'rake and a beau'. Although she referred to him as 'my poor cousin', her correspondence does not reflect any affection for him.
4. Finally, it is most improbable that Mrs. Montagu should have waited from 1727, the year of Edward's chimney-climbing escapade, until the last years of the century before inaugurating her parties, if these were to celebrate his recovery.

It may be concluded, then, that Mrs. Montagu's interest in the climbing-boys, as their hostess or as vice-patroness of a society established to better their condition, arose from philanthropic motives and had nothing to do with the restoration from chimney-sweeping of her own or Lady Mary's son. Fanny Burney was doubtless right in ascribing Mrs. Montagu's charitable impulse towards the climbing-boys

Not to vain glory, then, but to kindness of heart, should be adjudged the publicity of that superb charity which made its jetty objects, for one bright morning, cease to consider themselves as degraded outcasts from society.¹

¹ Mme D'Arblay, *op. cit.* ii. 272.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

THE WHEREABOUTS OF THOMAS KILLIGREW

1639-41

THOMAS KILLIGREW, courtier and dramatist under Charles I and manager of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, after the Restoration, although a figure of no great importance, has from time to time attracted the attention of scholars. In 1930 Alfred Harbage published a study which cleared away many difficulties regarding the detail of his career.¹ A number of queries, however, still remain unanswered; and one of them concerns the lack of the evidence about him between the summer of 1638 and the autumn of 1641. In 1636 Killigrew had returned from travels in France and Italy, and married Cecilia Crofts; his first group of plays, Italianate and romantic tragi-comedies, were written by then; and during the two following years State papers reveal him as a courtier at Whitehall, unscrupulously begging for the estates of convicted recusants and criminals. In January 1638 his wife died, and one of his petitions to the King was dated 3 July, six months later. From that time onwards nothing certain is known of him until Sir Henry Vane mentions Killigrew as a messenger from Henrietta Maria in England to the King in Scotland, early in November 1641. It has been surmised from internal evidence that *The Parson's Wedding*, his next play and a comedy of extreme cynicism, was written in 1640 or 1641, but that is all. During the three years' interval what had become of the young man and why does his name no longer appear in the ordinary sources of information?

It seems that, in this connexion, no one has yet made use of the *Lismore Papers*. These papers, edited by A. B. Grosart (1st series, 1886, and 2nd series, 1888), were originally Richard Boyle's, the first and 'great' Earl of Cork, and they largely concern the student of seventeenth-century Anglo-Irish politics. They also give much detailed information about the Earl's family and their affairs. Now one of his sons, Francis, in October 1639 married Elizabeth Killigrew, the sister of Thomas. Immediately afterwards Elizabeth entered the Boyle household while her sixteen-year-old husband went abroad with his younger brother Robert under the supervision of M. Marcombes, a French tutor.²

Travel results in correspondence, and correspondence between the

¹ Except where other references are given I am indebted to this work, *Thomas Killigrew Cavalier Dramatist 1612-1683*, by Alfred Harbage (Philadelphia, 1930), for biographical details.

² *Lismore Papers*, 1st ser. v. 112.

Earl of Cork and his sons and his sons' tutor enables us to say a little more about the Boyles' relative by marriage, Thomas Killigrew. In fact, during part of the three-year silence Killigrew was on the Continent.

In November 1639 Francis and Robert reached Paris, and there, writes M. Marcombes, they met Mr. Thomas Killigrew. Before the end of the month they were in Geneva, and the two boys settled down to studies and recreations prescribed by the tutor. Robert, the 'Skeptical Chymist' of a future date, was the perfect pupil, Francis rather less so. But in March 1640 Mr. Thomas Killigrew also arrived in Geneva. In a few days he must have seen a good deal of his brother-in-law, for the tutor sent word to the Earl of Cork of the visitor's arrival, with the comment:

I think he will not Stay long; which perhaps will be ye better for your sons: for although his conversation is very sweet and delectable yet have they no need of interruption, especially Mr. francis. . . .

Three weeks later the Earl was informed that Killigrew had 'gone to Basel, with a resolution to cross the Alpes', leaving behind a fine watch and jewellery to be forwarded to his sister Elizabeth.¹

For over a year the correspondence made no further mention of him. The young men in Geneva had been themselves hoping to visit Italy but after many delays they received a letter from their father in March 1641, asking them to await further instructions before venturing on an Italian tour. (They could not know how difficult times were for the Earl of Cork.) Robert Boyle replied, promising obedience; he added that they were proposing to take three weeks' holiday from Geneva 'whence we have not stirred these sixteen months'.² They had returned from the excursion, which took them to Chambéry and Grenoble, by 5 May; and it was after this date that Thomas Killigrew appears once more in the course of their correspondence. The vexation, the anger of M. Marcombes every time he mentioned Killigrew's name during the second half of 1641 provides fresh evidence about the character and activities of this wandering gentleman.³

He must have reached England in about June 1641; for in June he spread a report that Francis and Robert Boyle were poorly supplied with clothes and pocket-money by their tutor. Cork asked Marcombes for an explanation, and the tutor grew extremely agitated in his reply. He pointed out that Killigrew had not seen the young men since March 1640, 'for the last time Mr. Killigrew came to Geneva he saw us not; for we were already towards Grenoble and Chambéry'. He suggested that the traveller might have credited the untrustworthy remarks of a servant recently dismissed from the household. The complaints simply were not true, 'unlesse

¹ *Lismore Papers*, 2nd ser. iv. 96, 113-14.

² It must be admitted that they were absent in Savoie for two days in June 1640, *ibid.* 116.

³ *Ibid.*, 190-2, 201-7.

he should thinke that no body is well apparelled and that no body hath money but those that doe borrow more than they are able to pay'.¹

This part of Killigrew's biography can therefore be reconstructed along the following lines. He was in Paris by November 1639. He was in Geneva during March 1640 but soon left for Basle, apparently intending to travel on to Italy. We may note, in passing, that the title-page of *The Parson's Wedding* in the folio edition of his plays (1664) describes it as 'written in Basil in Switzerland', that one of its themes is the return to England of 'two young gentlemen, Mr. Careless and Mr. Wild', after a tour of the Continent, and that on the internal evidence Killigrew's latest biographer conjectures that the play was written in 1640 or 1641. At this point he disappears from view for a year; but he must have held firm to his expressed intention of crossing the Alps because in March 1641 he came twice to the English College of the Jesuits at Rome.² Returning home immediately afterwards, he paid another visit to Geneva,³ in April, the only occasion when the Boyles were absent from that city for any length of time. A little later he reached England and reports of his conversation soon came to the notice of the Earl of Cork.

The *Lismore Papers* give, finally, a glimpse of Killigrew after his return. On 20 December 1641 Marcombes wrote from Florence in the greatest agitation of mind. His pupils were at long last enjoying Italy; the more promising of the two was reading modern Italian history and 'the new paradoxes of the great star-gazer Galileo'.⁴ But far away, in England, Thomas Killigrew had apparently suggested to his sister Elizabeth that they should leave the country together and join her husband, Francis Boyle, in Italy. The tutor now begged Cork to veto any such scheme. If Killigrew ever arrived in Italy tutor and pupils would leave Florence at once and go elsewhere, in accordance with the earl's instructions. It struck Marcombes as strange that he should behave in this spiteful manner; two years earlier in Geneva he had shown him a letter he was writing to his sister Elizabeth Boyle, praising the tutor's care of her husband. But then, what sort of a man was Killigrew? Marcombes proceeded to an attack and a judgement which has, at least, the flavour of amateur eloquence:

He could very well persive By my answers that I do not love profaine and irreligious discourses, and that I cannot approve one that speakes ill of his o[w]ne

¹ Ibid., 202-3.

² H. Foley, *Records of the English Province, &c.* (London, 1880), vi. 621.

³ A. Harbage states (op. cit., p. 41, n. 1) that Killigrew's family Bible, into which he wrote certain details of his career, was *La Sacra Bibbia, tradotta in lingua Italiana da Giovanni Diodati* (folio, 1640). The title-page of this Geneva edition, unlike the frontispiece, gives the date 1641. It is conceivable that Killigrew acquired the book on this homeward journey. One of the Diodati family at Geneva helped the Boyles to transfer money there from England at this time. *Lismore Papers*, 2nd ser. iv. 165-9.

⁴ T. Birch, *Works of Robert Boyle* (London, 1744), i. 13.

Mother and of all his friends, and that playes ye foole allwayes through ye streets Like a Scoole-boy, having allwayes his mouthe full of whoores and such discourses, and braging often of his getting money from this or ye other merchant without any good intention to pay. . . .

Such was the impression made upon a French Protestant by this particular English courtier and man of letters in 1640 and 1641.¹

These facts and opinions contribute something new to our knowledge of Thomas Killigrew's early career. Between his first journey into France and Italy in 1635-6 and the long period of exile after the outbreak of the Civil War, travels sufficiently well known to his biographers, must now be placed another lengthy sojourn on the mainland of Europe, in 1639, 1640, and 1641.

J. W. STOYE

A NEW SCOTT LETTER

THE following is a copy of an original autograph letter by Sir Walter Scott which was bequeathed by a Genevese physician, Jean-Charles Coindet (1796-1876), to the Bibliothèque publique et universitaire de Genève in 1876. It is here published for the first time by permission of the keeper of manuscripts, Dr. Bernard Gagnebin.

Scott's handwriting in the winter of 1826-7 when the letter was written had become difficult to read. I gratefully acknowledge the generous help I have received from Sir Herbert Grierson who has, from a photostat, confirmed my transcription and has placed at my disposal his own notes and those of Dr. Henry Meikle, Historiographer Royal for Scotland, on the persons and the poem mentioned in the letter. The text is reproduced without any change of spelling or punctuation.

My dear Sir,

The poem I mentioned to you as in the Library at Taymouth Castle is called Duncan Laider (that is Duncan the strong or rather the ruffian) it is mentioned by Pennant and I saw it myself about thirty years ago when I enjoyed Lord Breadalbanes hospitality at the Castle. Now as Lord Glenorchy is become a member of our learned body I hope you will have interest enough to prevail with his Lordship to bring this very curious manuscript to Edinburgh to be carefully transcribed and if his Lordship did not himself wish to give it to the Bannatyne Society I would be happy to have his permission to do so And in either case I would render any assistance in my power to elucidate the work or assist the publication.

The work is in Scots verse & contains a curious picture of the Highlands at

¹ *Lismore Papers*, 2nd ser. iv. 231-4.

an early period and would be in every point of view a most acceptable addition to our learned labours.

Yours truly
W. Scott.

3 Walker Street
Tuesday.

The addressee of the letter appears to have been a member of the Bannatyne Club. It must have been written between 27 November 1826 and 30 June 1827, when Scott resided in Edinburgh, in a furnished house, No. 3 Walker Street. Lord Glenorchy was the son and heir of Lord Breadalbane. Taymouth Castle is a seat of Lord Breadalbane. The present holder is Lord Breadalbane and Holland.

The poem in Scots verse is 'Duncan Laiders *alias* Makregouris Testament' and is printed (pp. 149-73) in *The Black Book of Taymouth, with other papers from the Breadalbane charter room*, edited by Cosmo Innes, Bannatyne Club, 1855 (cf. C. S. Terry, *A Catalogue of the Publications of Scottish Clubs*, 1909, p. 44). The author of the poem is unknown. Duncan, whose testament it purports to be, was executed on 16 June 1552. He had terrorized the Highlands since 1513, and the poem describes his acts as a cateran. He then bequeaths certain possessions to various individuals, for instance to the Curate he leaves Negligence 'thairwith his parochinaris to teche', and to the Vicar the 'upmaist claith' and the 'kirk kow', satirizing the Church quite in Lyndsay's manner. In some touching verses he bids farewell to various places in the Highlands.

According to the preface of the Bannatyne Club volume by Cosmo Innes, Pennant saw the poem in Taymouth Castle in September 1764. He mentions the work in *A Tour in Scotland* (1769), a book much used by Boswell and Johnson in their tour. He also communicated it to Thomas Warton who in his *History of English Poetry* (1875 edition, p. 536) writes of it as 'an anonymous Scottish poem' which 'contains capital touches of satirical humour, not inferior to those of Dunbar and Lyndesay'.

In a letter of 17 March 1831, Scott writes to David Laing that 'Duncan Laidier has unhappily disappeared from the library at Breadalbane', which may account for the poem not appearing in the Bannatyne Club's publications until 1855.

H. W. HÄUSERMANN

MATTHEW ARNOLD AND RICHARD COBDEN IN 1864

SOME RECENTLY DISCOVERED LETTERS

'I REALLY want to *persuade* on this subject, and have felt how necessary it was to keep down many and many sharp and telling things that rise to one's lips, and which one would gladly utter if one's object was to show one's

abilities.' So Matthew Arnold wrote of the three articles on 'Middle Class Education and the State' which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* and were later republished with the title *A French Eton*. This solicitude, privately expressed, cushioned the force of many of his observations, and gave to his theme a persuasive rather than a powerful appeal.¹

The pungency of his views, however, is revived by reading three recently discovered letters which he addressed to Richard Cobden at this time. Similar ones, it may be legitimately inferred, were addressed to Sir John Pakington.² Cobden, described by Matthew Arnold as 'a man of brilliant understanding', had come to despair of achieving what was the most important of all social objects to his mind, that of popular education.³ Pakington, a statesman who was in Matthew Arnold's opinion 'more inclined, in education matters, to take the course I want to see taken',⁴ was still consistently moving for the establishment of a national system of popular education. He and Cobden were on opposite sides of the political fence, and Matthew Arnold admired them both.

His sympathies appeared, before this correspondence, to be with Cobden: especially as Cobden had experienced the bitter opposition of the dissenters in his efforts to establish some form of national educational movement. Of Edward Baines, editor of the *Leeds Mercury*, Cobden wrote 'we are as wide apart as poles asunder upon the vital questions of the day'.⁵ Arnold, having written the first two parts of *A French Eton* (mainly at the Athenaeum between the hours of eleven and three), sent copies to Cobden and Pakington, thinking it important to inform both these statesmen of his 'judgement'.⁶ Politics were in the family now; for his brother-in-law, William Forster, was a manufacturer whose 'tone and spirit in his public speeches' had begun to 'distinguish him from the old stagers, whose stock vulgar Liberalism will not satisfy even the middle class, whose wants it was originally modelled to meet, much longer'.⁷ Indeed, it was at Forster's house that he met Cobden, during the summer of 1863. Availing

¹ *Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. G. W. E. Russell (London, 1901), i. 255. *A French Eton* was published at London and Cambridge in 1864.

² These three letters were found in two bundles of correspondence (Add. MSS. 43669 and 43670) among the Cobden Papers (Add. MSS. 43647-78) in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum. They are not noted in the slip index. Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 263, quotes a letter of Matthew Arnold's dated 11 February 1864 in which he acknowledges a reply from Cobden and Pakington.

³ *A French Eton*, p. 110; Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden* (London, 1896), i. 300.

⁴ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

⁵ Morley, *op. cit.* ii. 96. See also p. 145 where he writes to Bright: 'Mr. Baines and a large party of Dissenters, the very salt of Liberalism, have managed to snatch away from us more than half our old cry of "National Education" and you see what a mess we are in for want of a radical policy to inspire the great supine public with some hopes of advantage from a further reform of Parliament.'

⁶ Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

himself of that introduction, he wrote to Cobden, enclosing a copy of the first two instalments of *A French Eton*:

2 Chester Square
January 30th 1864.

My dear Sir,

I had the honour and pleasure of meeting you at my brother-in-law—William Forster's—in the summer and I avail myself of that introduction to trouble you with two articles of mine in 'Macmillans Magazine' on the subject of State aid to Education, or rather, to use the more correct French term, to secondary education in general. The articles bear the title 'A French Eton'.

I am most anxious you should do me the honour to read them. There are few people for whose deliberate judgement on a question of this kind I should have so much respect—there are few people whose judgement on it would have so much weight with those who must ultimately decide it—the middle class themselves. All I have seen abroad,¹ all I have seen in this country, convinces me how ruinous a policy for themselves the middle classes pursue in helping the aristocratic and governing class to prevent any real establishment of education. They once had plenty of reason to be jealous of the State, now they have, or need have, none, if they will but (as they have the power of doing) give a direction to its action themselves. At this moment, in this country, I firmly believe the establishment of secondary instruction is a more urgent matter than even that of primary.

I have no business to trouble you, but I cannot resist endeavouring to gain at least your attention to a great cause for which no public man could do more than you, and which will certainly in some shape or other come under discussion this next session.

Believe me to be, dear Sir, with great respect,

faithfully yours,
Matthew Arnold.

The Right Honble. Richard Cobden M.P.

P.S. I shall take the liberty of sending you the third and concluding article when it appears.

Cobden replied even before he had read them to say that 'he should certainly read them and was prepared to be interested, but that his main interest was in the condition of the lower class'.² This change of front on Cobden's part provoked Matthew Arnold to write again two days later:

My dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your letter and its inclosure.³ I most entirely agree with you that the condition of our lower class is the weak point of our

¹ Arnold had been to France on an educational mission the year before Cobden signed his famous treaty with Chevalier in 1860.

² Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

³ I have been unable to trace this enclosure, and assume it was a printed copy of one of Cobden's speeches, or some French pamphlet. The first is more probable, since in the two preceding months Cobden had been (with Bright) earning the hostility of Delane, editor of *The Times*, for his speeches on land reform.

civilisation and should be the first object of our interest, but one must look, as Burke says, for a power or *purchase* to help one in dealing with such great matters, and I find it nowhere but in an improved middle class.

I believe, with Tocqueville, that the multitude is most miserable in countries where there is a great aristocracy and I believe that in modern societies a great aristocracy is a retarding and stupifying element, but our aristocracy will not modify itself and English society along with itself; our lower class will not modify them, and one can hardly wish it should, as things are, for it would be a *jacquerie*; our middle class, as things are, has in my opinion neither the wisdom nor the power to modify them. I know our Liberal politicians think higher than I do of our middle class as it at present exists; I have seen a good deal of it, from my connection with dissenting schools, and I am convinced that till its mind is a great deal more open, and its spirit a great deal freer and higher, it will never prevail against the aristocratic class which has certain very considerable merits and forces of its own; and it will not perhaps, deserve to prevail against it. At the same time there is undoubtedly just now a ferment in the spirit of the middle class which I see nowhere else, and which seems to me the greatest power and *purchase* we have; and all that can be done to open their mind and to strengthen them by a better culture should I think be done; we shall then have a real force to employ against the aristocratic force and a moving force against an inert and unprogressive force, a force of ideas against the less spiritual force of established power, antiquity, prestige, and social refinement.

This is how I think my father would have looked at it, had he been alive. Mr Disraeli, whom I met last week in Buckinghamshire,¹ said to me of you that you 'were born with the mind of a statesman'; so you will not be impatient with me if I travel a little beyond the bounds of immediate party politics.

Your inclosure I shall venture to keep, until I hear from you that you want it returned; it is most forcibly and temperately written. I have seen much of France. I have always said that I would infinitely rather be one of the peasants I have seen and talked to in the most backward parts of France, Berry or Brittany, than one of the peasants I have seen and talked to in Buckinghamshire or Wiltshire. As for the law of succession of the French Code, that, or something like it, is, I am convinced, a mere question of time; it will inevitably make the tour of Europe. In the old feudal European countries so slight a measure as Mr. Bright, following the example of America, proposes, would I am certain prove quite inoperative. But we shall see.²

Forgive my troubling you at all this length, and believe me, my dear Sir, with the most cordial respect

sincerely yours,
Matthew Arnold.

The Right Honble. Richard Cobden M.P.

¹ This was on 27 January, when he was the guest of the Rothschilds. He first met Disraeli nine years before.

² Bright made a famous speech on the land question on 26 January, six days before this letter was written. It was regarded as almost Gracchine in character, and his name with Cobden's formed a convenient analogy with the two Romans.

Two days later, Matthew Arnold wrote the third letter, this time from the Athenaeum.

My dear Sir,

One last line to thank you for your kind and most interesting letter. I shall see William Forster tomorrow and will give him your message.

Our masses always seem to me to *kindle* less, to show less life, power and spirit than those of France; still they have, as you most truly say masses do have, fine and generous instincts; and on many matters the wise men would sooner trust them than the aristocratic or the middle class. But they are not, and cannot well be so far as I can see, an organ for governing this country; an aristocratic or a middle class may be; a middle class may be made (ours is not at present) an organ for governing it as a wise man would wish, an autocratic class hardly can.

I can well understand the discouragement with which your experience of the education question has left you; perhaps it is the advantage,—among many disadvantages,—of working by literature, that one may make more light of difficulties than in practical politics one can, that one may regard more the future and the ideal to be reached. I daresay the old generation of protestant dissenters are impracticable—I suppose Mr. Baines and Mr. Morley (excellent men) must die in their sins on the education question, must travel on to the end in the old Nonconformist rut which nowadays leads nowhere; and men like these have been, till now, the kernel of the middle class.¹ But a new generation is beginning to show itself in this class, with new impulses astir in them, more freedom and accessibility of spirit; it is on them one must work—in literature, at least.

I beg your pardon for having saddled you with a title which does not belong to you. I know it *ought* to belong to you, and thought it did.²

With renewed cordial thanks for your letter, I am, dear Sir,

most sincerely yours,
Matthew Arnold.

Richard Cobden Esq., M.P.,

There the correspondence closes. It is tantalizing that we have not Cobden's letters to Arnold, nor (if it was written) Arnold's letter enclosing the third part of *A French Eton*. For this was the part on which Arnold laid most stress.³ He could not finish it till April because of a lecture he was writing.⁴ But he lost nothing by the forced delay, for in the meantime the *Nonconformist* had whetted interest by attacking the first two parts of

¹ A year later Samuel Morley bought the *Daily News*, and before the decade closed he had changed his mind on the education question, taking a large portion of the dissenters with him. Baines remained to become a leader of the National Education Union, a body which disagreed with State education as represented by the school boards. Both are familiar to readers of *Culture and Anarchy*.

² i.e. the title of a Privy Councillor, which appears on the two previous letters.

³ 'In this part I am really labouring hard to *persuade*, and have kept myself from all which might wound, provoke, or frighten, with a solicitude which I think you will hardly fail to perceive' (Russell, op. cit., p. 250).

⁴ 'Pagan and Christian Religious Sentiment', which was subsequently published in the *Cornhill* in this year.

his book. For Arnold was in deadly earnest. Writing to his mother on 16 February he said:

I mean, as I told Fan in the autumn, to deliver the middle class out of the hand of their Dissenting ministers. The mere difficulty of the task is itself rather an additional incentive to undertake it¹

and to Lady de Rothschild:

people say it is *revolutionary*, but all unconstrained thinking tends, perhaps, to be a little revolutionary.²

Matthew Arnold was right in ensuring that the responsible politicians knew his 'judgement', as he called it. Thirteen months after these letters were written another committee was appointed to examine the deficiencies of English education, and Matthew Arnold received such congenial employment that he could rejoice:

It is exactly what I wanted. I did *not* want to be a Commissioner, I did *not* want to be Secretary, but I *did* want to go abroad, and to Germany as well as France.³

W. H. G. ARMYTAGE

'THE STATUES'

A NOTE ON THE MEANING OF YEATS'S POEM

THE main theme of 'The Statues', which is printed in *Last Poems and Plays* (1940, p. 57), is made clear by a passage in *On the Boiler* (1938):

There are moments when I am certain that art must once again accept those Greek proportions which carry into plastic art the Pythagorean numbers, those faces which are divine because all there is empty and measured. Europe was not born when Greek galleys defeated the Persian hordes at Salamis, but when the Doric studios sent out those broad-backed marble statues against the multiform, vague, expressive Asiatic sea, they gave to the sexual instinct of Europe its goal, its fixed type.⁴

The last stanza of the poem affirms that the Irish, in a movement of history which brings about the return of the Pythagorean philosophy, must and will adopt a like artistic principle.⁵

Yeats habitually draws conclusions about history and intellectual climates from sculpture, and associates with sculpture the idea that the 'Arts are . . . amongst those things that return for ever'.⁶ The notion that

¹ Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

² *Ibid.*, p. 269.

³ 3 April 1865 (*ibid.*, p. 292).

⁴ Mr. MacNeice, in his *The Poetry of W. B. Yeats* (1941), p. 175, also quotes this passage when referring to the poem.

⁵ Cf. 'Under Ben Bulbin' in *Last Poems*, p. 91.

⁶ For example, in 'Discoveries' (*Essays* [1924], p. 359).

the beauty and power of certain sculptures—those, for example, of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus—are founded upon calculation and measurement was not a recent one:

[Maud Gonne's] whole body seemed a master work of long labouring thought, as though a Scopas had measured and calculated, consorted with Egyptian sages, and mathematicians out of Babylon that he might outface even Artemisia's sepulchral image with a living norm.¹

'World-famous golden-thighed Pythagoras',² therefore, 'planned it' in the sense that the whole manifestation of artistic creation which made the 'statues' possible was prepared for by Pythagoras' doctrine of numbers, although Pythagoras was no sculptor himself. What, however, does Yeats mean by the distinction between 'character' and 'passion' in the first stanza of 'The Statues'? Some light is thrown on this by passages in Yeats's essay on 'The Tragic Theatre' written in 1910. There Yeats had stated his belief that tragic art must 'exclude or lessen character' in the sense of the individual characteristic and idiosyncrasy, the 'little irrelevance of line', the cultivation of the feeling "How well that man is realized, I should know him again were I to meet him in the street". Into the places left 'empty' of the 'real world', 'rhythm, balance, pattern, images that remind us of vast passions' will thereby be summoned. Yeats adds:

And when we love, if it be in the excitement of youth, do we not also, that the flood may find no stone to convulse, no wall to narrow it, exclude character or the signs of it by choosing that beauty which seems unearthly because the individual woman is lost amid the labyrinth of its lines as though life were trembling into stillness and silence, or at last folding itself away?³

In the theatre, therefore, passion brings 'character enough':

... for it is always ourselves that we see upon the stage, and should it be a tragedy of love we renew, it may be, some loyalty of our youth, and go from the theatre with our eyes dim for an old love's sake.⁴

Both the first and the second stanzas of 'The Statues' deal, it would appear, with the 'Doric' sculptures of the fifth century: Pythagoras, of the sixth century, was the forerunner of the Phidian work. Yeats has much to say in *A Vision* about the historic significance of the differences between the archaic sculpture of the sixth century, and the Ionic and Doric modes; he read Furtwaengler and thought that the Ionic and Doric united in the work of Phidias. He makes none of these distinctions in the poem before us, and omits the idea, which would have wrought confusion on the

¹ *The Trembling of the Veil*, 1922 (*Autobiographies* [1926], p. 448).

² 'Among School Children', *The Tower*, 1928 [*Collected Poems* (1934), p. 244].

³ 'The Tragic Theatre' in *The Cutting of an Agate* (*Essays*, p. 301). Cf. 'Estrangement' (1909) in *Dramatis Personae* (1936), p. 89 and 'The Death of Synge' (1909), *ibid.*, pp. 118-20.

⁴ *Essays*, pp. 297-8.

principal theme of the poem, but is necessary to the 'system', that 'measurement' came *after* 'those riders upon the Parthenon' and that 'the dancing-master outlived the dance', although in his later analysis of Roman portrait sculpture the predominance of 'character' is emphasized with distaste.¹ In the second stanza the Phidian sculptors are, however, considered 'greater than Pythagoras', because Pythagoras, as Yeats might have read in Taylor's translation of Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras*, spent many years in Egypt and Babylon, where he learnt the secrets of the Magi and therefore may be said to have become infected with the 'Asiatic vague immensities' which did not trouble Phidias.²

The third stanza is the most difficult and also the last of the four which requires analysis of this kind. If Yeats had been attempting a complete exposition of the historical cycle, he would perhaps have written a stanza describing the rise of the 'Asiatic and anarchic Europe' of the Middle Ages,³ which is the 'many-headed' of the first line of the third stanza, and is consequently analogous to the 'many-headed foam of Salamis' that symbolizes the Asiatic armies of Xerxes. The Hamlet 'thin from eating flies' (or 'eating the air promise-crammed') is the spirit of modern speculation,⁴ and the 'fat dreamer of the Middle Ages' is the medieval monk, isolated within his 'few courts and monasteries',⁵ as well as William Morris and Titian's portrait of Ariosto—all antitheses of Hamlet. A passage from *The Trembling of the Veil* (1922) explains the conjunctions. Yeats has been recalling his memories of Morris and writes of Watts's portrait of Morris:

Its grave wide-open eyes, like the eyes of some dreaming beast, remind me of the open eyes of Titian's 'Ariosto', while the broad vigorous body suggests a mind that has no need of the intellect to remain sane, though it give itself to every phantasy: the dreamer of the middle ages. It is 'the fool of fairy . . . wide and wild as a hill', the resolute European image that yet half remembers Buddha's motionless meditation, and has no trait in common with the wavering, lean image of hungry speculation, that cannot but because of certain famous Hamlets of our stage fill the mind's eye.⁶

¹ *A Vision*, pp. 260-77. I use the edition of 1937, but there are no important variations in this respect from the 1925 edition.

² For the looking-glass in this stanza, by whose means women both discipline themselves and live a sensuous life where 'all thought becomes a body', cf. 'Michael Robartes and the Dancer' (1921, *Collected Poems*, ed. cit., p. 198) and the 'heroic discipline of the looking-glass' ('Discoveries' in *Essays*, p. 334).

³ *A Vision*, p. 283.

⁴ Cf. Oscar Wilde's epigram given in *The Trembling of the Veil* (*Autobiographies*, p. 167): Hamlet invented modern pessimism: 'The world has become sad because a puppet was once melancholy.'

⁵ *A Vision*, p. 283.

⁶ *The Trembling of the Veil* (*Autobiographies*, p. 175). With the references to Titian's 'Ariosto', a picture with a special meaning for Yeats, cf. *A Vision*, p. 294; *Autobiographies*, pp. 143, 361. The effect of the portrait and that of the Phidian marbles are compared by implication in *A Vision*, p. 270. For another example of the connexion in Yeats's mind between medieval contemplativeness and Buddhism, see the Introduction to *The Cat and the Moon in Wheels and Butterflies* (1934), p. 138.

This passage foreshadows and explains the greater part of the third stanza of the poem. The idea of the 'empty eyeball' of 'the man who saw all through very emptiness'¹ is one which Yeats had used before in commenting upon the various conventional methods of representing the human eye in sculpture and portrait. He concluded that a difference in method implied a different world-view.² Grimalkin, the cat, is seen 'crawling' to Buddha's emptiness, because the cat is the animal whose eyes are the most responsive to the altering phases of the moon (with all that those phases mean to the author of *A Vision*). Because of this, Yeats writes in the 1934 Introduction to *The Cat and the Moon*, the cat becomes a symbol of the 'normal man'. 'When gong and conch declare the hour to bless', the normal man responds at length to the need for contemplative emptiness by worshipping or fleeing for refuge to the Buddha symbol, the 'fat dreamer of the middle ages'.³

The meaning of the last stanza is plain in the light of the quotation from *On the Boiler* and 'Under Ben Bulbin'. A statue of Cuchulain now stands in the Central Post Office, Dublin.

'As life goes on', Yeats wrote in *The Trembling of the Veil*, 'we discover that certain thoughts sustain us in defeat, or give us victory . . . and it is these thoughts tested by passion, that we call convictions.'⁴ The poem is seen to be crowded with convictions of this kind, and few of them are, in fact, of recent growth. It demonstrates the remarkable continuity of his ideas and his ability to make metaphors out of them for one of his finest lyrics.

PETER URE

¹ See the parable related in 'At Stratford on Avon' (*Essays*, p. 131).

² As in *A Vision*, pp. 276-7, 280.

³ The cat is found subserving this symbolic purpose first of all in the poem called 'The Cat and the Moon' in *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919); then in the play of the same title (1926). The symbolism is explained in the Introduction to the play in *Wheels and Butterflies* (1934).

⁴ *Autobiographies*, p. 234.

REVIEWS

The Rivalry of Scandinavian and Native Synonyms in Middle English especially *taken* and *nimen*. By ALARIK RYNELL. Pp. 431 (Lund Studies in English XIII). Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup; London: Williams & Norgate; Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, 1948. 18 kr.

Dr. Rynell's study has two main purposes. The first is to give a fuller account than has hitherto existed of the geographical distribution in ME. of words of Scandinavian origin. The second is to consider what results from the conflict of such words with native synonyms; here he gives special attention to the two verbs *taken* and *nimen*. But with both purposes in mind he also considers the history of one hundred and one (literally not figuratively) other Scn. words besides *taken*, together with some of the native words with which they come into rivalry. His material is drawn from forty-six ME. texts, and within the limitations imposed by his choice of words and of texts he achieves his first purpose satisfactorily. His results more or less confirm what was already known, though of some matters, e.g. the respective contributions of Danish and Norse, he says very little.

His second aim is less successful because the principles on which he works are not entirely sound. His normal method is to investigate what he calls pairs of synonyms, e.g. *bark(e)* (Scn.)—*rind(e)* (native), *gome*—*zeme*, *yeme*. A pair of such synonyms may be referred to as A—B. Each text supplies information about the rivalry of the A and B elements of at least some pairs. In a few cases only does Dr. Rynell work with the formula A—B¹, B², e.g. *cro(s)e*—*rod(e)*, *crouch(e)*, where two (roughly) synonymous words are faced with a Scn. rival. He does not see that a similar plurality of the element B (and sometimes of A) exists and is of the highest relevance in a far greater number of cases. A few examples may be given at random; they are not always exact synonyms, but nor are his own pairs. To *band*, *bond*—*bend* add *rakente*—*feter*, (*raken*)*teze*, *schakel*; to *wunien* (opposed to *dwellen*) add *wikien*, *eardien*, and even *liuen*. To *zift*, *zefpe* (opposed to *gift*) add above all *zife*, but also *lac* and perhaps also *lean*. This takes no account of synonyms of French or other foreign origin (e.g. *manicle*, *give* beside *bend*, &c.) which Dr. Rynell purposely ignores. So with his major problem, the rivalry of *taken* and *nimen*. Neither word can be dealt with adequately without reference to a whole group of others of similar meaning, yet he pays little attention to these. Such a group would include *fon*, *geten*, *ziten* (a pair he considers separately in opposition to one another), (*be*)*halden*, *henten*, *hepen*, *rechen*, *snacchen*, *cacchen*, *saise*. It is fair to add that Dr. Rynell (p. 9) shows an awareness of the rather arbitrary nature of his procedure; the ideal method of working by 'each separate notion' he regards as an impossibly heavy task. But had he done this for a single 'notion' a much more valuable piece of work might have resulted.

It is no pleasure to write in this way of the weakness of method which thus vitiates a work of such great industry and learning, but it is impossible not to

regret the fact that part of Dr. Rynell's effort has been wasted because the subject was not more intelligently conceived. The shortcomings of doctoral dissertations of this kind are partly the result of the rules which govern their production. In Sweden they are printed in definitive form before the 'disputation' which decides whether their merit entitles the author to a doctor's degree. This disputation, which involves a number of competent scholars in a good deal of research, inevitably reveals defects of scheme and errors of fact, but the book is by that time on the market and those who buy it receive no supplement embodying the quite valuable results which must often emerge from the labours of the candidate's opponents. If the printing must continue to precede the disputation (which is to be deplored), would it not be possible to supply the publishers with such a supplement to go with each copy of the book?

ANGUS MCINTOSH

Nowhere was Somewhere. How History Makes Utopias and How Utopias Make History. By ARTHUR E. MORGAN. Pp. 234. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947. \$3.00; 16s. net.

In his prefatory letter to *Utopia*, first published in 1516, Thomas More asked his friend Peter Giles of Antwerp to ascertain if possible from the 'ancient mariner', who had told them the tale, in what part of the New World Utopia was situated. He was all the more anxious for exact information since a very pious and learned man, supposed to have been Rowland Phillips, sometime Warden of Merton College and Vicar of Croydon, was burning with desire to go out as missionary among the noble pagans. Peter Giles, entering fully into the spirit of the comedy, answered that Hythloday had indeed mentioned it, but just at that moment one of More's servants had come up to his master and whispered in his ear, whereas Giles himself was prevented from hearing because a member of the company had been seized with a violent fit of coughing in consequence, he thought, of a cold caught on ship-board. Hythloday in the meanwhile had passed farther afield, whether back to Utopia or into eternity nobody knew, taking his secret with him. The problem thus remained unsolved, and the Vicar of Croydon had to give up his ambition to become the first Bishop of Utopia. This, however, has not worried Mr. Arthur E. Morgan. He could have told the Vicar where to go. Moreover, Mr. Morgan maintains that More knew.

With great ingenuity he shows that more was known to the Portuguese about the South American continent than is apparent from the printed records. But he overlooks the fact that all the information needed for More's purpose was actually to be found in these, and it does not seem likely that whatever additional knowledge may have been available to the King of Portugal and his most intimate advisers could possibly have reached More's ears even at Bruges or Antwerp. Miscellaneous crews taking part in secret exploration could hardly have been permitted to disperse and noise abroad in the various countries of their birth the most jealously guarded secrets of the Portuguese court. Even if we were to admit

the possibility of More's meeting by the sheerest fluke with an original of the fictitious Hythloday, what the latter could have told him, however, could on the evidence produced have been little more than hearsay stories of a fabulous country in the interior of the continent where wealth was untold and precious stones plentiful. There is no evidence whatsoever that anything at all was known of the manners and institutions of the Incas before their discovery by Pizarro. Nothing daunted Mr. Morgan exclaims: 'What if, instead of a fanciful "nobody", the supposed narrator in *Utopia* was an actual traveller bringing back a true story of his travels? Would not such conclusions be startling?' We must not grudge Mr. Morgan making More merry in his heaven, but it is necessary to insist that in view of the insufficient evidence the likenesses between More's Utopia and ancient Peru must be quite uncommonly striking if they are to justify such 'startling conclusions'. Yet I fear that had he set out to find Utopia with the sole aid of Mr. Morgan's astrolabe the Vicar of Croydon could not but have been bitterly disappointed.

Instead of a loose federation of city-states benevolently ruled by magistrates elected by adult suffrage for a limited period of office in an island of the blessed, the disillusioned vicar, after penetrating some of the most inaccessible jungles on earth, would have found in the terraced mountain ranges of Peru a highly centralized imperialistic tyranny, inferior in nothing to the most ruthless of modern dictatorships. Whereas the so-called 'prince' in Utopia was liable to be deposed on the merest suspicion of totalitarian intention, the power of the Inca was uncircumscribed and his word law, so that by possessing themselves of his person a handful of Spaniards could exercise his authority and command the entire administration of the empire. So far from being encouraged to pursue their peaceful occupations and seeking above all the improvement of their minds in study and the exercise of virtue, while not forgetful of preparedness in case of armed aggression, over the inhabitants of Peru 'there hung always the shadow of war', a war of conquest and aggrandizement at the expense of their neighbours. The external policy of the Utopians, on the contrary, was one of benevolence and even charity. Further, instead of choosing their occupations according to their own inclination as in Utopia, the subjects of the Inca had their crafts assigned to them by the government and could be compulsorily transferred from one task to another. The Utopians had their own written alphabet while the Incas were illiterate and, on the contrary, the statistics kept by means of knotted cords in ancient Peru were unknown in Utopia.

These are only a few instances, which could be multiplied almost indefinitely, of radical differences between More's 'ideal republic' and the historical Inca empire. Similarities there are also, although more superficial than real, and usually confined to such traits as were common to the South American civilization before the coming of the Incas and known to More from printed accounts of the discoveries of the West Indies.¹ If he had chosen to base his inquiries on these instead of the learned labours of the most recent scholarship, Mr. Morgan would have found a state of affairs much more akin to the Utopian commonwealth. More's purpose, though, in the writing of *Utopia* was not the overthrow of the

¹ See the present writer's *Introduction to Utopia* (London, 1946), pp. 27-8 and 53.

English constitution and the introduction of Utopian law, but a change of heart that would make us all work as unselfishly as the Utopians for the good and welfare of all, corporeal and spiritual.

Nature may be as 'parsimonious of originality' as ever maintained in Mr. Morgan's book, but one cannot help feeling that an ample share has fallen to the lot of its author, and whatever the shortcomings of his work he cannot be accused of any lack of originality. For the rest he has written a lively and pleasant book about Utopian longing and realization and about the interaction of past achievements of mankind and its dreams of a happy future in a land of heart's desire. It would have strengthened his argument if he had been able to eke it out with a description of the actual putting into effect of More's Utopia during the author's life-time in the organization of the native population in Mexico by Vasco da Quiroga, Bishop of Michoacán, who was so impressed by More's word-picture that he could not rest before giving its airy nothings a local habitation and a name.¹

H. W. DONNER

The Life of Edmund Spenser. By ALEXANDER C. JUDSON. Pp. xii+238 (Johns Hopkins Variorum Edition). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1945; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1946. 25s. 6d. net.

The Life of Spenser appended to the great Variorum Edition of his works was a thing to look forward to. It is with real regret that I must confess to disappointment. Dr. Judson says in his Preface: 'I have undertaken to place him in his environment, surround him with his friends and associates, and study the influences both physical and human upon him.' Unfortunately he seems to have decided to avoid entangling himself with the poems, and so gives a portrait of an ambitious thruster which they are far from supporting, and that portrait is surrounded with very flat and faint shadows of his friends and associates.

The whole book leaves one with an uneasy feeling that Dr. Judson has not used the knowledge he must have. Mulcaster is just another schoolmaster, Harvey just another pompous don, Leicester just another nobleman. There is no word of music at school, or the kernel of Ramist teaching and common sense hidden under the load of false gallantry in what Dr. Judson baldly describes as 'a tedious discussion on earthquakes', no hint of the queer character that looks down on us from the portrait in Warwick Castle of the Queen's Robin to whom his nephew Philip brought a present of mathematical instruments from the Continent. Why Spenser should have liked or admired any of them does not appear; though this Spenser is too insensitive to make it seem important.

In every chapter Dr. Judson has missed his chances, sometimes through ignorance as when he remarks the 'odd-sounding title' of Clerk of Faculties without noticing that this (quite ordinary) technical term means that Spenser's attention would be drawn to the state of the churches on which he has something to say in 'The View', sometimes through failure of imagination. I make this criticism

¹ See S. Zavala, *La Utopía de Thomas Moro en la Nueva España* (Mexico City, 1937); the same author's *Ideario de Vasco da Quiroga* (Mexico City, 1941); and 'L'Utopie réalisée: Thomas More en Mexique', *Annales* III, i. (Paris, 1948).

because Dr. Judson gives such full details of Spenser's movements, which he has followed on the ground, and such a clear and useful account of the official and legal papers which throw intermittent gleams on his obscure life. It is in the translation from papers to life that he weakens. The proof lies in many small points, but one larger example will suffice. After giving a tame account of the affair at Smerwick—an account devoid of perception of strategy, tactics, or the issues involved—Dr. Judson has to face the question whether Spenser was telling the truth when he denied (in 'The View') that Grey promised the garrison their lives. Having stated, rather tepidly, that he was, Dr. Judson then leaves the question in the air by citing, in a footnote (p. 92), Professor O'Rahilly's opinion that he was not. The matter cannot be left thus. Either Spenser was a liar or he was not. Now Professor O'Rahilly does not bring any new evidence. He gives a list from 1580 to 1650 of men (mainly Irish) who say Grey promised the safety of the garrison, but not one of them was present at the conference. On the other hand, three men who were there say he specifically refused, and San Joseppi told his men so. Grey may have lied, and Spenser covered him out of loyalty, but Grey had no need, Spenser was writing when Grey was dead and forgotten, and San Joseppi, the garrison commander, was a fool if he threw away his best defence against the charges brought against him afterwards; and Grey's dispatch and San Joseppi's report clearly imply the same conversation. (I should perhaps explain that I am neither English nor Irish and have no sentiment in the matter—my ancestors in Spenser's time had small cause to love the English—and I judge on the documents.) The expedition was a misconceived and mismanaged affair. Whatever Stukely might have made of it, San Joseppi, the professional soldier who took command after his death at Alcazar and was persuaded to carry on, was in a hopeless position, perched on a crag by the sea, with no chance of affecting the course of affairs in Ireland, badgered by ideologists, and bewildered by the unreliable guerrillas who were supposed to co-operate with him—other men have had such experience since his time. A neat and lucky combined operation put an end to the futility, and, naturally, every party blamed the others. San Joseppi's officers backed him with testimonials, but someone saw in it a good story against Grey, who was too efficient and too hostile to be allowed to escape. The story of his perfidy is just the one any 'form-critic' would expect. Professor O'Rahilly tries to make it a contest of evidence, but there is no contest: all the evidence is on one side, as any law student would see, and it is the stronger that any motives for invention are on the other. When Dr. Judson, then, comes to a lame conclusion—or, rather, lames his conclusion by an afterthought—he gives cause to doubt his historical judgement throughout, which is a pity, because he has worked so well.

It might have been well to print all relevant documents—including, for instance, the drawing (half-map, half-picture) of the attack on Smerwick, which would have adorned Dr. Judson's pages more usefully than a modern snapshot of the headland—and add such commentary as is required to correct and explain them. As it is, Dr. Judson's book is indispensable to any student, but we must wait for the picture of Spenser and of his friends and associates and environment.

W. L. RENWICK

The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century. By FRANCES A. YATES.
Pp. xii+376. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1947.
[No price given.]

This is a very learned book, based on extensive reading of both primary and secondary sources of information. The author regrets that she lacked opportunity for more detailed research in France before she completed her book; but the defect, if it is one, is not serious, because the merit of the book is not so much in its voluminous information as in its careful and thoughtful study of the inter-relations of men and books. The point of view of the French academies of the sixteenth century proves to be a point of vantage for the study of the Renaissance in France.

The *Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim* (Paris, 1623) by Marin Mersenne is a document of the greatest value, not only in the history of sixteenth-century French academies, but in its revelation of the spirit and faith that entered into their activities. Mersenne says of Baif's Academy:

Would that that Academy might drive its roots into this our time and put forth flowers and fruits, never ceasing divine praises and bringing forth musical persons, each of whom would make music with his whole heart.

Writers on Baif's Academy have often missed and perhaps still miss the true nature of that enterprise. They are apt to regard it as purely literary and musical; whereas music, wedded of course to poetry and oratory, was held in a Platonic-Pythagorean sense as an encyclopaedic force organizing and permeating all arts and sciences. This encyclopaedic concept, the author shows, was the prime mover in all the academies. Post-Cartesianism has little by little robbed us of any principle which unifies all knowledge, so that music and even mathematics have been displaced. Pontus de Tyard (*Discours philosophiques*, Paris, 1587), poet of the Pléiade and religious and philosophical theorist of the academies, invented a Fourth Grace, *Pasithée*, whose task was the illumination of the encyclopaedia of arts and sciences. Although she represented also a mortal, Madame de Retz, there was no incongruity, for all things (especially mortals) were parts of a whole and were mutually necessary. The soul itself was divine, and the stages of the soul's descent to earth and therefore of its ascent to the Sovereign Unity constituted the familiar Neoplatonic ladder, whose grades are Nature, Opinion, Intellect, and Understanding. The first step is man's art and industry; the others are higher stages of insight. The sixteenth-century French academies actually sought to implement this Neoplatonism. Since poetry is from the Muses, mystery from Dionysius, prophecy from Apollo, and love from Venus, there is Platonic warrant for the elaborate attempt of the academies to find in ancient music, in the union of music with poetry, and, by extension, in all arts and sciences a key to religion. The paganism (so-called) of the French Renaissance was really a symbolic imitation, or perhaps a sort of syncretism.

An unexpected feature of the academic movement in its early stages and, to some degree, throughout its career is participation in it of both Huguenots and Catholic *politiques*. D'Aubigné, for example, with Du Bartas and Du Plessis-Mornay was not only extremely active in the Navarre Academy, but was well

known in the Parisian academies. He actually claimed the authorship of the *Ballet comique de la Reine*. La Primaudaye's *L'Académie françoise*, translated into English and frequently published in England, emanated from Navarre and lost none of its prestige because of its origin. No book shows better the encyclopaedic range of the French academies of the sixteenth century. La Primaudaye's universal harmony is one and the same with that of Jamyn, Baif, Tyard, Bruno, and Mersenne. Great light is thrown by this book on the frequently ill-understood teachings of Giordano Bruno.

Another matter examined at length is religious institutions and policies and, particularly, Henri III's efforts at Counter-Reformation. San Carlo Borromeo, who greatly influenced Henri III, held, not only that the wrath of God was stirred by the sins of the Church, but that ascetic living and the works of charity offered a road to grace, and this book makes it clear that there is no doubt about the sincerity of Henri III in his religious institutions at Vincennes and in the fateful efforts he made to turn his courtiers into penitents. Du Perron, a member of the religious academy at Vincennes, is very serviceable to our author in making clear the true nature of this movement and by showing that its paganism was innocuous.

And so we see [says Du Perron] that the ancients, guided only by a natural light, were nevertheless inspired to say, speaking in their paganism, that the Gods were spread all through the world, and that all things are full of Gods, and that we continually breathe their images and similitudes.

We thus come to understand better the numerous sirens and satyrs of religious art and literature. The myth of Circe takes on current Christian meanings, and Apollo, Mercury, Venus, and Minerva, indeed Jove himself, are made to serve the turn of Neoplatonic religious mysticism. Henri III emerges from this book much improved, and Catherine de' Medici is seen to have been one who longed for religious peace and reconciliation. Henri's attitude towards Henry of Navarre, a heretic, and towards the heretic Queen Elizabeth was part of his undoing. He and his academicians hoped that the world might be saved by music, not sensual music, but measured and ordered music which would reveal God's universal plan, allay the evil passions of men, and breed love in their hearts, for evil passions were merely disorder. Even Bruno's *La cena de le ceneri* might be read, says the author, as a debate concerning the Real Presence. Undoubtedly Henri III's Counter-Reformation had a gentler and more peaceable appeal than that of the League, and the reason is to be found in men like Baif, Ronsard, Tyard, Du Perron, and Mersenne who placed their reliance on music and the gentler arts of life as harmonizing and humanizing agents. The author asks the interesting question whether the poets of the English Renaissance were not also poet-theologians.

The Fontainebleau fêtes used themes afterwards developed in the *Ballet comique*, and the same themes and doctrines pass on from academy to academy and from fête to fête. Neoplatonism and mystic religiosity march tenaciously forward into the seventeenth century. Rivault's *L'Art d'embellir* (Paris, 1608) and his *Le dessein d'une Academie* (Paris, 1612) present, says our author, like

Tyard's dialogues, an encyclopaedia of all the disciplines, with music as the connecting thread. Mersenne was also a conscious inheritor of the Platonic traditions of the Florentine Academy, and he and his group were representative of the mind of Europe on the eve of the age of science. He did not forget the teachings of Mauduit, the musician, nor of Baif. He remembered the Scriptures, the Church Fathers, Apollo and the Muses, and myths and fables from India, Persia, and Egypt.

With the last chapter of the book, on Seventeenth-century French Academies, comes the establishment of *L'Académie française* and the series of specialized academies instituted by Richelieu and Colbert. They too show the influence of academic humanism, and even the eighteenth-century *philosophes* had not entirely forgotten the doctrine of musical integration.

England of course lagged far behind Italy and France throughout the period, and no powerful organizing agency, philosophy, or enthusiasm seems to have operated there and given to the current beliefs of the age an adequate and formal expression; and yet even this statement is unwarranted in the present state of our knowledge. Court patronage was apparently lacking or only sporadic, and records are perhaps imperfect; and yet such as exist should be subjected to further study. There were in Elizabethan England many associations with one another of men of learning and artistic skill, and Englishmen were not unaware of what was going on intellectually throughout Europe. More is known about the facts and features of various fêtes in honour of Queen Elizabeth and of other royal and noble persons than of the philosophic or religious zeal that created them. The same is in some measure true of the era of the masque in the reign of King James I. Again, costumes, scenery, music, and poetry are better known than is the spirit that brought them about. Nevertheless there are many clues by which the ideas of the Elizabethan mind and the beliefs of the Elizabethan heart might be unravelled. Bacon, not a Neoplatonist, knew the subject of masques and triumphs well and was deeply versed in the wisdom of the ancients. Unfortunately he conceals his foreign connexions. The Platonism of both Sidney and Spenser was profound. Campion followed the theory of *vers mesurés*. In the reign of King Charles I French connexions become obvious; but the English field, except perhaps the masque and its origins, remains relatively unexplored and unco-ordinated. The range and comprehensiveness of Miss Yates's scholarship is also needed at home.

HARDIN CRAIG

Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance. By BRUCE PATTISON. Pp. viii+220. London: Methuen, 1948. 18s. net.

This is a book every student has, at some time, asked for; ignorance of its subject qualifies to a distressing degree the value of any generalization the critic of poetry, inept in music, may venture on the Elizabethan lyric. Mr. Pattison's book, of which one had a foretaste in his essay 'Literature and Music' in Professor Pinto's *The English Renaissance* (1938), is a learned and skilful attempt to supply in convenient form the information that less musical readers so badly need,

and it is beyond doubt successful. The author has rightly refused to omit considerations and citations which happen to be familiar, for the importance of his book is that he offers a readable conspectus of the whole issue; a collection of facts—bearing on the disintegration of the sung lyric, the general history of English song-forms, the close social contact of musician and poet, the effect of the Reformation on music, the liberation of the stanza—and some opinions, some attempts to define the status of poetry in the art-music of the last years of Elizabeth's reign.

For the facts everybody will be grateful; but some uneasiness may beset the reader as he studies the inferences drawn from them. They repeat views which have been authoritatively expressed before, but which have never been fully convincing.

The heart of this book is in the chapters on the madrigal and the air. The author follows the supreme authority, Dr. Fellowes, when he suggests that the madrigal was notable for its 'fidelity to the form and rhythm of the verse'; that the madrigal composers respected the text; that their compositions were 'a very satisfactory compromise between the claims of music and poetry'. The evidence for the view that the madrigalist contrived to maintain and develop his musical interests without damaging his text is very strong; it was the avowed policy of Byrd and Morley, and, though Weelkes suggests that for him the text is the mere germ of a musical idea, the testimony of the other composers never conflicts with the essentially humanist (and protestant) argument that the words are the most important things in vocal music. It is clear that the musicians themselves were generally ready to admit this, and the madrigals they wrote, Weelkes's as much as the others, are texts scored as a poet 'scores' his idea; the composer subjects his chosen poem to a process resembling, and perhaps in his mind identified with, the rhetorical device of Amplification, and the composer is engaged in the very process Puttenham describes in speaking of the part played by various figures in 'enforcing' and 'enlarging' a theme. This may help us to see why the madrigalists were so assiduous in *descriptio*, the rhetorical function they could most easily simulate; and to the explanation of which Morley devotes so much care in his *Plaine and Easie Introduction*. It also accounts for the harmonic devices, more *recherché* and more significant than this easy pictorialism, which the great madrigalists developed to amplify a single phrase or even a single word of the text.

But is it true that this relationship of word and note approaches the degree of coalescence found in folk-song and ballad? Generally speaking, the simplest madrigal texts must have suited the composer best. Although the cadential unit was only a single line, his art was to amplify not even that, but a phrase; and the result, a sweetly painful suspension, a short trope, can be of great musical but little poetic interest—perhaps at best a sketching-in of some of the emotional overtones of a word like 'death' or 'pain' considered in isolation. Here Mr. Pattison's remarks—he says that this process of 'word-painting' is an illustration of the quickened interest in the psychology of the individual which the drama is supposed to express—seem beside the point; and opera is surely not, as he goes on to claim, 'the seventeenth century culmination of a dramatic tendency that

runs through sixteenth century music' and is exhibited in the madrigal, but the result of the speculations of scholars who quite deliberately turned their backs on the whole ex-liturgical manifestation of contemporary counterpoint and re-examined monody in the light of ancient musical practice.

The summer of the English madrigal was late and also short. It was short, one would say, for these reasons. First, that the music called into the service of Petrarchism had already a vivid emotional life of its own—a point the author might have made more firmly, and which is authoritatively demonstrated in Dr. E. H. Meyer's *English Chamber Music* (London, 1946). That the madrigal stimulated this development is, I suppose, beyond dispute; music, not poetry, went on its way enriched, the bee from the flower. Secondly, that lyric poetry could not much longer be confined within the line-unit. Thirdly, that poetry was not getting a fair deal. Amplification, musically, meant disastrous inaudibility, and one suspects that Weelkes was more honest and more self-critical than the others when he implied that he didn't care.

Mr. Pattison argues that the madrigal capsized under the topweight of chromaticism, but more obviously verse deserted or was discharged from a ship in which it could find no adequate quarters. Pepys, after part-songs, complained that 'singing with many voices is not singing but a sort of instrumental musique, the sense of the words being lost by not being heard, and especially as they set them with Fuges of words, one after the other . . .', and it must have been evident all along that contrapuntal music ruins the audibility of the verbal sequence as soon as one voice imitates another. It may be objected that, in England, madrigals aimed to please only, or primarily, the performers; and they at least could appreciate the skill of the melodic amplification of the lines they were singing, and also their modification by imitation and other contrapuntal devices in the other parts. But there is a simple and powerful argument against this: one has only to read through the words given to any one voice in a handful of madrigals to discover the kind of nonsense each voice individually sang.¹ The words, *in extenso*, mean no more than they do in a Handel chorus—'All we like sheep'.

The relationship of music and poetry in the madrigal was, then, uneasy, haphazard, unstable; hence its collapse at the very time when improved sight-singing techniques were coming along to facilitate the reading of difficult vocal lines. Yet there was a general feeling that a synthesis was important—and this may have been the reason for the ready naturalization of a seemingly promising form in this country. But only a radical reassessment of the situation offered any real chance of a *rapprochement* between the now-estranged parties. Each was impatient to be gone his own way; and everyone knows what happened to lyric poetry. Music wanted its liberty; it had taken it long before in the elaborate liturgical trope (from which drama grew as it were fortuitously, a musicians' *aide-mémoire*), and it now took it in secular trope, in enormous amplification or in fa-las *ad libitum*, expressing as the florid *melismata* of the Kyrie (pretty universally despised by now) had expressed it, the impatience of an art developing its own rhetoric, yet in some way inhibited by its obligation to another art. The music the Church had fostered, though it had already in the time of Tallis left

¹ See E. H. Fellowes, *The English Madrigal Composers* (Oxford, 1921), p. 151.

home, carrying the *In Nomine* motive with it as a remembrancer, was firmly headed away from language long before its uneasy flirtation with the art-lyric in England. Another kind of music might agree to marry the word; but it would come from Greece and not from the medieval church; and it would be homophonic.

Rosseter's dismissal of the madrigal—'Musicke . . . long, intricate, bated with fuge, chained with sincopation, and where the nature of everie word is precisely exprest in the Note, like the old exploded action in Comedies, when if they did pronounce *Memeni*, they would point to the hinder part of their heads, if *Video*, put their finger in their eye' . . . (this may be presumed to have been Campion's opinion also)—indicates one reason for the return to the air—a relationship at once more balanced and more poetically sophisticated is desired. Campion was fully aware that it had been sought earlier and with great determination by the academists of Italy and France. This is no place to describe the experiments of the Florentine theorists and of Baif's circle—that has been done very well by Dr. Walker and Miss Yates²—but these experiments have important implications which Mr. Pattison takes little account of.

The dissatisfaction which poets—even epic poets—felt at the divorce of music and poetry was by no means a conventional native echo of Chaucer's attitude; it arose from humanist preoccupations. The attempt to restore Greek musical forms was not, of course, new, as the student may see from Dr. Reese's book;³ but the challenge that aroused the academies was a product of Renaissance humanism, a characteristic reaction to antiquity which may be expressed thus: 'From all accounts we fail to achieve in music what the ancients habitually achieved. How may we recover the lost "effects" of ancient music? By carefully reconstituting the methods of ancient music. Something has been lost, and, by study, we may find it.' And in these remarks one may freely substitute 'poetry' for 'music', since it was recognized that the Greeks did not differentiate them. The quest for that which was lost was, therefore, of high importance to poets and poetic, as well as to musicians and music; indeed musicians may well have been less interested as a class than poets, realizing the potentialities of the modern art, and perhaps seeing nothing beyond antiquarian value in ancient techniques which must have appeared primitive.

The quest was a difficult one. Only a few scraps of Greek music existed, and they gave little assistance. But the object of the search was laudable and must have seemed important. The 'effects' that were lost were powers worth recovering; therapeutic powers, powers over the emotions, Timothean powers—that moral control over his hearers which, it was held, was given to the Homeric bard. All that was needed was to discover a lost technique. The notion that something was lost began to dominate musical speculation. It was not confined to the Italian musicologists who were willing, if need were, to attempt even the Greek

¹ Dedication of *A Booke of Ayres* (1601). See M. C. Boyd, *Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism* (Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 130-1.

² D. P. Walker, 'Musical Humanism in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *Music Review*, ii, 1, 111, 220, 288; iii, 55. F. A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1947).

³ G. Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (London, 1941).

enharmonic system, quarter-tones notwithstanding, but who finally agreed that monody and a strict metrical nexus met the case; it became commonplace, even vulgarized, and some thought that a note had been lost from the gamut. The divorce of music and verse was worrying everybody, and this concern was not merely the result of the march of the printing press, not merely the result of the confidence musicians felt in their own unaided powers, but also of a humanist uncertainty, the basic humility of the high Renaissance.

We may be glad that in England a similar, though less doctrinaire, and perhaps less altogether serious, quest led not to 'measured music', any more than the Areopagus established quantitative verse; but to the lutenists and a new interest in folk-song, in which 'most natural combination of word and tone . . . the relationship of the two elements stands on a healthy basis'.¹

I have done far less than justice to the author in omitting to describe what is admirable in his book—the study of developing stanza form, the analyses of word-music relationships in settings throughout the period, with some particularly apt comment on Henry Lawes; the sure, clear development of the theme, the firm control of diverse and voluminous material. There is much here that need not be done again; I have tried to show where the musical layman still needs help if his understanding of the problem is to be adequate to his purposes.

Finally, the author was unfortunately unable to mention several important works published after he had compiled his material. All the studies mentioned in my review and its footnotes, except Dr. Fellowes's book, belong to this category.

FRANK KERMODE

Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language. By SISTER MIRIAM JOSEPH, C.S.C. Pp. xiv+423 (Columbia University Studies in Comparative Literature 165). New York: Columbia University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947. \$3.75; 21s. net.

The word 'Arts' in this title has its precise Elizabethan sense; it denotes, in effect, the 'arts' in which a man graduated via the old *trivium*—grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The book follows up a series of recent works in which the Renaissance theory of communication is applied to Elizabethan or Jacobean writings. Anyone who already knows Karl R. Wallace's *Francis Bacon on Communication and Rhetoric* will find this a companion study, laid out in the main under the same Aristotelian heads—*logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*.

The author's aim is 'to present in organized detail essentially complete' the Renaissance 'General Theory of Composition' and to illustrate Shakespeare's use of it. The work is described as 'expository' and we are, I am tempted to say, warned that this fact 'precludes the omission of any part of the theory, however unimportant'. When the field has been mapped out (Part I, Ch. 1), we are led steadily through Shakespeare's use of the Schemes of Grammar, Vices of Language and Figures of Repetition (Part II, Ch. 2), then through *Logos* divided

¹ P. H. Lang, *Music in Western Civilisation* (London, 1942), p. 197.

into Topics of Invention (Ch. 3) and of Argumentation (Ch. 4), and, finally in Part II, *Pathos* and *Ethos* (Ch. 5). Part III is devoted to what may appear a somewhat curious enterprise—the reconstruction from different Tudor theorists of an 'ideal' Manual of the Theory of Composition under the same heads as those outlined above. This must have been a laborious task, and though it is handy to have it juxtaposed to the preceding illustration, there inheres in it something of the pastiche.

I have sometimes felt a little puzzled as to the kind of reader the framers of these books have in mind. They are highly technical studies and would therefore seem to be addressed to the specialist; at the same time they often include material which a specialist would find otiose—in this case, the painstaking establishment by citation of the Elizabethan meaning of 'art' and some rather lengthy transcriptions from modern critics. The cumulative matching of precept and example may, after a time, mesmerize the less wary, experienced, or imaginative reader into too simple and mechanical a conception of the relation between the Theory and dramatic 'making': there are x Figures, Devices, Methods in the treatises and we are shown $x-y$ (a not very significant number) in Shakespeare. The patient and simple may deduce a too rigid or direct causal connexion and acquire a distorted notion of an Elizabethan dramatist setting to work, manual in hand, and drawing even dramatic or stage contrivance from an 'Arte' of composition. The impatient will probably give up and so miss some interesting sidelights on word- or mind-play in well-known Shakespearian lines.

A few mixed examples from the chapter on the Topics of Invention will show that there is a real danger in the dutiful uniformity of approach to the more and less dramatically relevant parts of the subject. Acceptance (on the stage) of clothing as a perfect disguise seems to be taken as a development of 'Habit', a sub-heading under the topic 'Subject and Adjuncts'. The scene of Perdita's flower-distribution is said 'to acquire new charm' if viewed as an extension into action of the figure 'Taxis'. 'Ethopoeia' or the description of 'natural propensities, manners and affections' is given one illustration—Sebastian's words to Gonzalo: 'They'll take suggestion as a cat laps cream.' But must not any play (or novel) be full of it, as of 'Characterismus' (description of body or mind)? We are told that 'Dialogismus' is essential to good drama, and is, of course, exemplified throughout Shakespeare's plays. One example (Hermione and Mamillius) is, however, given, presumably for 'completeness', and the Bastard's use of the technical term 'dialogue' is noted. 'Pragmatographia' is 'of great value in drama to report events which occur off-stage'; 'Topographia', or description of places, is exemplified by the Queen in *Cymbeline* on Britain's natural barriers against invasion—and so on. It is fair to emphasize at this point that this work is a study of the theory of composition, i.e. of such material as Aristotle handled in his *Topics*, logical treatises, and *Rhetoric*; the *Poetics* with its insistence on the absolute primacy for poetry of 'imitation' or re-creation lies outside its field.

Listening to his fellow men and women will often prove, to the poet-dramatist, an aural excitement impelling him to 'imitation'. The grammarians noted a 'vice', 'heterogenium' or the irrelevant answer, and there will be little resistance to accepting Dromio of Ephesus here as a somewhat synthetic link between the

theory and clownish speech. But when we pass on to the Nurse replying to Juliet's impatient questions:

Jul. What says he of our marriage? What of that?

Nurse. Lord, my head aches! What a head have I!

and when we think on from her to Mistress Quickly, we are tempted to say 'A fig for the grammarians!' We come here to very subtle matters, for the speech of Shakespeare's clowns and 'comics' can be graded all along the line from the bookish, verbal, and artificial to the homely, earthy accents of living voices. Deliberate parody often enters into Shakespeare's comic language and here we can be sure of our ground. It would certainly not be for me to minimize the duty of appreciating the Elizabethan zeal for the arts of language as an approach to the Shakespearean craft of expression. His open zest in the exploitation of these arts is accompanied, particularly in the earlier plays, by continual critical awareness. If Shakespeare's rhetoric grew more 'functional' with time, it did not disappear. If, in serious contexts, he uses a technical term to flash a point, or if the bearing of a passage depends on the recognition of one of the less obvious logical figures, it is proof of a knowledge shared between him and a sufficient number of his audience. There is no lack of this clear testimony to the pressure of the contemporary Arts of Speech, and it is, of course, illustrated in this book in appropriate contexts. Here, too, flexibility must be maintained as to the relation between this testimony and the 'Theory', if that is viewed as a codified body of precepts. Shakespeare's own zeal for language may have led to expenditure of midnight oil upon the manuals, but if the Art had not been in the world as well as in the books it would have been of limited use to a working dramatist, and the world of patrons, poets, and wits could itself be a teacher. No manual could compete with the body of fellow poets as stimulus and exemplar. Moreover, the more functional the figures, the more perennial and pervasive they must be. They still limp in rags and tatters through Hansard. It was not the syllogism that first made men think; more than one sixteenth- or seventeenth-century teacher of eloquence found no difficulty in illustrating his classical equipment of precepts and figures from the Bible.

Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language might be regarded as an 'ideal' detailed response (*analysis*, as they called it) of a highly trained contemporary reader—somebody like Sidney, Bacon, and Donne rolled into one—who had mastered the 'decorum' of pure exposition.¹ From this point of view the 'ideal' manual (or *genesis*) in Part III gains relevance. Though I confess I find something merciless in these studies, in this particular case the firm and lucid organization smooths the path. The balance between logic and rhetoric is well sustained and the bearing of the Ramist movement on the management of the sixteenth-century *logos* is perhaps more helpfully unravelled than in most other works of similar compass. Argus-eyed 'detection' applied to Shakespeare's language will always bring its treasures home and spotting the figures has uncovered fresh force, meaning, point, or reference in numerous lines and passages. The book is excellently printed and produced.

G. D. WILLCOCK

¹ In other words: 'How it strikes a Contemporary.' We can usefully contrast Caroline Spurgeon's 'Shakespeare's Imagery and what it tells us'.

The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642. By BENJAMIN BOYCE.

With the assistance of notes by CHESTER NOYES GREENOUGH. Pp. xii+324.
 Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege,
 1947. \$5.00; 27s. 6d. net.

Mr. Boyce, with the initial guidance of notes left by the late Professor Greenough, has given us the first really detailed account of a limited but attractive genre. His aim throughout, as he says in his Preface, is 'exclusive and analytical': referring constantly to the Theophrastan method as his norm he devotes a large part of his book to a close examination of the development of the Character in Hall, Overbury, Earle, and their lesser-known contemporaries. In each author the structural arrangement, the material, the precise nature of the emphasis and tone, and the prose style are critically discussed. Above all, Mr. Boyce is watchful for any adulteration of the pure Theophrastan stream, a concern which at times leads perhaps to too rigid a demand for conformity: there is in Earle a 'really dangerous tendency' to write essays instead of Characters; Lupton, not knowing his own mind, 'blunderingly' turns to 'description and thence to undisguised analysis of social questions'; and Mr. Boyce deplors the double focus of such a Character as Earle's 'A Child' (which presents both the child and the less innocent spectator)—surely an enriching development rather than a 'disintegrating' effect of the 'essay-impulse'. One result of this approach is an occasional feeling of narrowness in the treatment of writers like Brathwaite who are rather free both in their use of the term itself and in their approximations to the Theophrastan ideal. But this feeling that too great a respect is being shown for the 'boon of a classical norm' is not frequent; in general Mr. Boyce's method justifies itself. His demonstration of the widespread awareness in the early part of the seventeenth century of a clearly defined artistic form is more discriminating than that of any previous writer on the subject. His analysis of the various English writings before 1608 which skirt round the Character strikes a satisfactory balance between too great an exclusiveness and the enthusiastic discovery of anticipations everywhere. This preliminary chapter on 'The Native Tradition' is in some ways the most stimulating in the book, elucidating the ancestry of the Character in the medieval homilectic works and Estates literature and in more varied writings during the period 1550-1608. Perhaps even greater stress might have been put on the encouragement given by Elizabethan drama for the ready acceptance of objective presentation of 'a well defined moral or psychological propensity governing a number of tabulated actions', but few will quarrel with the conclusion that although before 1608 many writers came unwittingly near to the Theophrastan method there is a 'thin but none the less real barrier between Hall and the entire body of earlier work'.

Mr. Boyce deals also with the relationship between Classical Rhetoric and the Character, with the theory and vogue of the Character after 1608, and with its connexions during the early part of the seventeenth century with the Essay and the Sermon. In conclusion there is a chapter illustrating something of a reversal of influence: whereas the Character derived stimulus in its early years from other forms it began during the decade before 1642 to repay some of its debts by its

own effect upon Moral and Didactic literature and such forms as the Conduct Books, the Epigram, and the Drama. Mr. Boyce's constant reference to his norm makes his estimate of these interrelations convincing, if at the price of some repetitiveness.

It is no easy task to trace the history of a literary form even when it is comparatively circumscribed in nature and time; the opposite dangers of vagueness and unimaginative formalism beset the writer. Mr. Boyce moves through his material with tact and discernment.

A proof-relic may be mentioned: p. 73, n. 34, refers to 'p. ???': this should read 'p. 98'.

A. K. CROSTON

The Origins of the Royal Society. By R. H. SYFRET. *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* (1948), V. ii. 75-137.

This able paper by a Fellow of Girton has involved genuine research and thought. The subject was a difficult one to handle, because it is, of necessity, tenuous; it could hardly have been treated with better judgement, an essential qualification where the evidence is indirect.

Miss Syfret's object is to show that the Royal Society had an earlier origin than the meetings of Wallis and his contemporaries in London in 1645; and that 'The Invisible College', so frequently taken to refer to these assemblies, really refers to a different body which hardly existed outside the minds of men who were not scientists at all. The origin of such a body as the Royal Society can hardly be precisely defined, because various people, with beneficent, if rather vague, objects, both in England and France, had formulated schemes for extending knowledge before 1645.

The well-known letter from Wallis to Smith, dated 29 January 1697, describing the meetings in London of 'Persons inquisitive into Natural Philosophy', and their subsequent meetings in Oxford is the basis of our information of the beginnings of the Society as it became when it received its charter in 1662. But although Professor Bush in the *Oxford History of English Literature* mentions it, historians have not paid sufficient attention to Wallis's statement, which Miss Syfret emphasizes, that it was Theodore Haak who, to quote Wallis, 'I think gave the first occasion, and first suggested those meetings'. Now Haak was not a scientist, but he was associated with Hartlib, Comenius, and Dury in connexion with a scheme they had devised earlier, 'whereby the World was to be brought from error, dissension and war to the way of light and truth'. This Universal College may well have suggested the lesser plan for investigating part of truth, that is scientific problems, which were subjects of frequent discussion among them. As Miss Syfret says, Comenius in his *Via Lucis*, published in 1668, 'does not offer evidence of a direct link between his pansophic scheme of 1641 and the Royal Society, but he seems clearly to indicate that he saw a connexion between the two in aim and idea'.

'The Invisible College' is referred to among contemporaries by Boyle only. His references are in letters from 1646. Birch in his edition of Boyle (1744) says that Boyle *probably* referred to the early meetings of the men who eventually

formed the Royal Society. But Boyle tells Hartlib that 'God has made you hitherto the midwife and nurse' of the College. Hartlib had no known connexion with the Wallis group; and Miss Syfret argues that Boyle may well have been referring to the Universal College of Hartlib, Dury, and Haak, as described by Comenius; particularly as Boyle's description of 'The Invisible College' does not seem to fit what we know of the Wallis group. Moreover Haak, at the time of his association with Comenius, had entered upon a correspondence with Mersenne who had organized, about 1635, regular meetings of mathematicians and physicists in Paris; so that, as Miss Syfret says, in 1638-40 'there was in London a small group interested in current scientific discoveries: it was composed of the members of the Comenian group as it can be called for convenience, although Comenius himself did not come to England till 1641. Through Haak the Comenian group was connected with Mersenne's scientific group in Paris. If it was Haak who suggested the meetings of Wallis and company in 1645, it would seem probable that he had in mind the part he had taken in these earlier meetings, and in later and more Utopian schemes. A Universal language (subsequently formulated in cyphers by Wilkins) was common to most schemes of the time.

Miss Syfret's arguments are closely reasoned and are difficult to condense. She gives her evidence with complete fairness and quotes her authorities fully. Incidentally the student will find an important section on contributions, chiefly by American scholars, to recent inquiries into the history of thought in the seventeenth century. Professor G. H. Turnbull's *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius* (1947), to which Miss Syfret refers, did not appear till her article was in proof, but this book hardly affects her arguments. If Miss Syfret's deductions are correct, as they probably are, she has added materially to our knowledge of how it was that the most successful academical society, outside the universities, which England has produced, came into existence. HUGH MACDONALD

The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift. Edited by HERBERT DAVIS. Volume the Ninth. Irish Tracts 1720-1723 and Sermons. With an Introductory Essay and Notes on the Sermons by LOUIS LANDA. Pp. xxx+386. Oxford: Blackwell, 1948. 14s. net.

The sixth volume (in order of publication) of Dr. Herbert Davis's fine edition of Swift's prose works follows at an interval of nearly seven years the five earlier volumes, 1939 to 1941. If the war is chargeable for the delay it has inflicted no injury upon paper, typography, or handsome appearance, nor upon the work of the two editors, each occupied with his assigned share of the book. Dr. Davis is responsible for a miscellany of tracts of Irish relevance, falling largely into the period between Swift's retirement to his deanery after the death of Queen Anne and the opening of the controversy over Wood's halfpence. Professor Landa contributes the best introduction to the sermons that has as yet appeared.

For the student, the historian, and for the biographer of Swift this is an important book, if for the ordinary reader it can hardly, save for two pamphlets,

make any direct appeal or arouse much interest. For six years after he took possession of his deanery, save for the business of the cathedral, Swift lived a secluded life. In his own words, 'I have continued . . . in the greatest privacy, and utter ignorance of those events which are most commonly talked of in the world'. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to suppose that his interest in Irish politics was at this time, or earlier, wholly dormant. As Hawkesworth justly observed, at the close of a biography of Swift, his character and outlook throughout life were 'uncommonly steady and uniform'; or, as Dr. Davis puts it, his 'attitude and tone . . . are exactly the same' in early and later Irish tracts. The volume opens with a pertinent illustration of this truth, which has only recently been appreciated. *The Story of the Injured Lady*, first published in 1746, has usually been associated with Irish pamphlets of later years; but, as Dr. Godfrey Davies showed in the *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 1943, the political allusions belong to a date immediately preceding the ratification of the Union with Scotland. While Scotland is in course of being accepted in marriage Ireland is represented as the ill-used mistress. There can scarcely be a doubt that the pamphlet, or at least the major part of it, was written in 1707. The tone is very like that of the *Letter to a Member of Parliament*, 1708. If, when writing these earlier tracts, Swift was conscious of wrongs calling for rectification the injustices had not eaten into his soul. They lack the vigour, forthrightness, and intensity of the pamphlets written in 1720 and after.

Further, as an introduction to the pamphlets gathered in this volume, Dr. Davis prints a long letter from Swift to Pope dated 10 January 1721. This letter is in fact a pamphlet in epistolary form. It was never intended for dispatch, and Pope averred that he never received it. Its importance lies in its account of Swift's literary life from 1714 to 1720 and in its testimony to the consistent and undeviating political principles governing his thoughts, his conduct, and his writings after his retirement from the English scene. It leads us by a natural step to *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* to which, in writing to Pope, he alludes. In this pamphlet Swift came out into the open against the misguided and unjust restrictions which England imposed upon Irish trade, reducing to poverty a country which might, freedom of development permitted, have flourished and prospered. He exhorted the Irish to use goods of their own manufacture 'utterly rejecting and renouncing everything wearable that comes from England'. He wrote with restraint, but such was the suspicion of competitive commerce on the part of officials in England and Ireland, that the printer was brought to trial. In the *Proposal* Swift was on sure ground. He was less wise in his opposition to the scheme for establishing a national bank in Ireland, a project at which he glances in the pamphlet, and which he continued to combat in later writings. Some, of doubtful authenticity, are relegated by Dr. Davis to appendices. Two pieces, one of a singularly unsavoury character, *The Wonderful Wonder of Wonders* and *Wonder of all Wonders*, are grouped with others as 'Probably written by Swift'. The external evidence in favour of his authorship is certainly strong. In his own copy of *Miscellanies*. *The Third Volume*, 1732, both are marked with a marginal pointing hand, a sign appearing in the same book against pieces undoubtedly written by him; and there are three slight

corrections to *The Wonderful Wonder of Wonders*. On the other hand, there is some evidence for Sheridan's authorship; there is authority for regarding the pointing hand as a mere call to attention; and in style and humour both these pieces sink much below what may be expected of Swift. Furthermore, in a letter to Knightley Chetwode, 13 March 1721-2, he wrote, after reference to a distasteful publication by 'one Dobbs a surgeon,' that 'Mr. Sheridan's hand sometimes entertains the world, and I pay for all'. Was he referring in particular to the two *Wonders*?

From the political pamphlets the volume passes to other writings composed about the same time. A good case is made out for questioning the authenticity of *A Letter of Advice to a Young Poet*, which has hitherto been attributed to Swift. When first printed in Dublin it was signed E. F. In the London reprint the letters E. F. were omitted, and the title-page definitely assigned authorship to Swift. It was, however, never acknowledged by him; and Faulkner, working in close association, did not at any time include it in the *Works*. Although witty, amusing, and brilliantly well written, a close examination fosters doubts. In the earlier part the resemblance to Swift's manner is remarkably close, but the imitation, if such it be, is not sustained. On external and internal evidence it is more than improbable that it came from Swift's hand. Possibly someone may have enjoyed the advantage of continuing an unfinished fragment; or may have set himself, certainly with unexcelled success, to imitate Swift, and then, wearying of his task, desisted. Dr. Davis, with justification, draws a parallel in style between this piece and *The Right of Precedence between Physicians and Civilians*, which we now know not to be by Swift. The comparison is illuminating. In fluency, irony, and apt illustration there is noticeable likeness, although of the two the *Letter* is a cleverer piece of writing.

To another letter, that addressed *To a Young Lady on her Marriage*, 'composed and copied out by Swift when he was at the very height of his power as a writer', Dr. Davis is prepared to accord higher praise than many. We are told that the lady to whom the letter was addressed did not take it too well. When all allowances are made for difference in time, in social custom, and in the correspondence of the sexes, it is difficult to believe that, however good much of the counsel, the terms in which it was couched could be readily acceptable. 'I never yet knew a tolerable Woman to be fond of her own Sex', writes Swift. The bride is warned: 'You have but a very few Years to be young and handsome in the Eyes of the World; and as few Months to be so in the Eyes of a Husband, who is not a Fool.' The lady is commended because hers was 'a Match of Prudence . . . without any mixture of that ridiculous Passion which hath no Being, but in Play-Books and Romances'. She is told that a woman, whatever pains she may take, 'never can arrive, in Point of Learning, to the Perfection of a School-Boy'.

An important reflection is here worth emphasis. A reading of this letter will go far to explain the story of Swift's relationship with Stella and Vanessa, which some of his biographers and critics have exalted into a mystery for the psychiatrists to busy themselves with.

A Letter to a Young Gentleman, Lately Enter'd into Holy Orders contains much

sound sense, and, with its advice on the art of preaching, carries us over naturally to the sermons. Although, as Professor Landa reminds us, Swift was in orders for fifty years we know surprisingly little of him as a preacher. Only eleven sermons have survived if we omit from the count one, *The Difficulty of Knowing One's Self*, which is of extremely doubtful authenticity. Swift showed little concern for the fate of his sermons after use, and spoke deprecatingly of them. 'Yet', as Professor Landa justly remarks, 'something may be said on the other side.' The discourses we have, 'plain honest stuff' in Swift's own words, must surely, when delivered, have been more arresting than most pulpit addresses. They have the merit of coming near the thoughts of average men, spoken by a man who had played his part in the give and take of life. Archbishop King once exhorted Swift to study Bishop Wilkins's *Gift of Preaching*, whence he might derive hints for the production of 'something new and surprising'. It must be admitted, however, that, whatever their merits or demerits, Swift's sermons exhibit little of genius or originality.

Professor Landa's introduction, a thoughtful, well-composed, and valuable expository essay, calls for high praise. Nothing as good has been written on Swift's conception of the preaching function, or on the subject-matter and design of the sermons. Professor Landa has, further, been at pains to acquaint himself with the discourses of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century preachers, their ideals, the rules governing form and arrangement, and to study the writings of divines who published works of advice for the clergy of their day.

It is gratifying to see a resumption in the issue of the successive volumes of this important edition of Swift's *Prose Works*, in which for the first time the text receives thorough scrutiny. Dr. Herbert Davis's scholarly introductions, the textual collations, bibliographical information, the use of autograph or relevant manuscripts give to these volumes an authoritative character.

HAROLD WILLIAMS

Hymns for the Amusement of Children. By CHRISTOPHER SMART. With an introduction by E. B. Pp. xvi+84. Oxford: printed for the Luttrell Society by Basil Blackwell, 1947. Annual subscription 25s.

This facsimile reprint brings into circulation once more a nursery classic which, to all intents and purposes, has been extinct for many decades. That it should now appear under the imprimatur of a learned society, prefaced by an introduction which, for all its ease and charm, gives abundant evidence of careful scholarship, is an interesting comment on changes in taste since Smart's brother-in-law Thomas Carnan issued the little volume as one of a series (I am glad Mr. Blunden has kept the end-advertisement) at the price of sixpence. The change is not only a matter of content. Carnan's book was squat and cosy, with not much marginal space left when the illustrative cuts had been got in. The present volume is cool and spacious—artistically perhaps an improvement, but lacking something of the intimacy of the earlier format. The cuts, which, as Mr. Blunden points out, had probably been used for other volumes, and which

bear only an occasional relationship to the text, have come out very spruce indeed.

To call Mr. Blunden's introduction masterly is perhaps to suggest pretentiousness, and nothing could be farther from the case. Yet it is difficult to find another word. In all too short a space he gives a deceptively lucid account of problems connected with the Smart canon, kills kindly and once for all the legend of 'one-poem Smart', and raises in its simplest terms the question of Smart's poetic stature. This last he does by suggesting that the 'Hymns for Children' are an epitome of Smart's earlier religious verse, which is true enough, but begs two further questions: are the poems in this volume anything more than that? and are the ideas here epitomized of a kind to warrant the title of a consistent philosophy such as the ideas in Blake's poetry are now seen to provide? On the first point the reader of these poems will be able to form his own opinion. The second question must await the reprinting of more of Smart's verse; and when this happens I can think of no more appropriate person to supply the answer than Mr. Blunden himself. My one quarrel with his introduction is that his frequent reference to these poems as Smart's 'Hymns' may mislead the reader who does not know that Smart wrote also another set of 'Hymns' annexed to his version of the Psalms. It is a very small point, but Smart's 'Hymns for Fasts and Festivals' are at once so good and so different from his 'Hymns for Children' that no chance of confusion should be allowed to arise.

NORMAN CALLAN

Enquiry concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness. By WILLIAM GODWIN. Edited by F. E. L. PRIESTLEY. Vol. i, pp. lvi+463; Vol. ii, pp. ix+554; Vol. iii, pp. 436. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947. \$12.50; 70s. net.

Professor Priestley has produced *Political Justice*, with critical introduction and notes, in a photographic facsimile which enables the modern reader to obtain Godwin's masterpiece at a price not much greater than the three guineas which Pitt thought a sufficient deterrent on its first appearance. It is perhaps unreasonable to wish that these three well-produced volumes might have cost less: the attractiveness of facsimile reprint, made in a continent not starved of wood-pulp, and from an original of spacious and dignified type, is clear at a glance, and it is certainly not ill-bestowed on a work notable for its own clarity and bold public appeal. Yet what should be a necessity will, no doubt, be removed for many readers into the category of a luxury: and that is a pity.

That being said, however, Professor Priestley has done his work well. His text is that of the third edition (1798), Godwin's latest revision, and his introduction relates Godwin's thought, in comprehensive detail, to its time and to those previous thinkers who influenced it. A full collation with the texts of 1793 and 1796 is elucidated by a section of the introduction which traces the modifications of idea and expression which each edition introduced. He has put all Godwin's readers much in his debt.

For Godwin is emphatically a man to be read. He challenges attention.

He that would break through a received custom because he believes it to be wrong must no doubt arm himself with fortitude. . . . If courage have any intelligible nature, one of its principal fruits must be the daring to speak the truth at all times.¹

The earnest sincerity is unmistakably Godwinian. Courage and truthfulness shine in *Political Justice* so steadily as to dispel much, though not all, of the irritation Godwin causes. Irritating he can indeed be, not only because of his treatment of Shelley, but also because his intellectualist morality is so blinkered that it can concentrate on the road ahead only at the expense of blindness to what is round about, or within. Yet as Hazlitt put it once for all, Godwin's experiment had to be made. And as Wordsworth put it once for all, it had to fail. The 'strict and universal decisions of justice' (*Political Justice*, i. 130), the

speculative schemes,
That promised to abstract the hopes of Man
Out of his feelings, to be fixed henceforth
For ever in a purer element²

must be seen, of course, not in any intellectual vacuum but against the social misery and irresponsibility against which they were a protest. But the 'duty' they prescribe, the 'justice' by which they stand, are tyrants as great as those they would replace, though more impartial.

It is not difficult to see where Godwin errs, though it is not easy to provide any less fallacious account of moral possibilities that shall not be merely defeatist. The basic difficulty is the acutely theoretical nature of his argument. A proposition like 'it is just that I should do all the good in my power' (i. 133) is logically unexceptionable but psychologically ineffective. No one does all the good in his power merely because logical understanding convinces him he should. The argument that all men act from the same ultimate assumptions (or would if they thought about them) is no better grounded than an argument that (say) all forms of art should be naturalistic because all men see like that. Godwin's world is perfect within its own conventions—but the conventions could not be those of the world of men. They contravene human nature, and we are left to apply to *Political Justice* Godwin's own words on Rousseau:

His *Émile* deserves perhaps on the whole to be regarded as one of the principal reservoirs of philosophical truth, as yet existing in the world; though with a perpetual mixture of absurdity and mistake.³

There is no question that one admires Godwin as a writer and thinker. It does not become an inhabitant of the twentieth century to feel superior about the delusions of perfectibilist optimism. It is at any rate an improvement on Leibnitzian optimism which Godwin powerfully rejects (cf. i. 455-6). And in Godwin, as in the Swift who influenced him, the trenchancy of moral absolutism can deliver the shrewdest of blows, which gain strength from the very narrowness

¹ *Political Justice* (ed. cit.), i. 142.

² Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, xi. 224.

³ *Political Justice* (ed. cit.), ii. 129-30, fn.

of their criticism, and from the pithiness of their style. Godwin's unflinching argumentativeness is exasperating but necessary for the full explanation of his views—explanation is his *forte*. But what we value most are those bright moments when a chapter of argument is brought to a point in a single unforgettable phrase—'No people are competent to enjoy a state of freedom, who are not already imbued with a love of freedom' (i. 257); 'To dragoon men into the adoption of what we think right, is an intolerable tyranny' (ibid.); 'Truth disdains the alliance of marshalled numbers' (i. 297). Such cogency deserves to make a new impact on each generation, even if it often makes pronouncements that need only to be heard to be rejected.

Political Justice is the monument of an irrecoverable Age of Faith. Godwin is an avatar of Reason, and so represents something quite other than the Common Sense (or that lower faculty, common-sense) which normally masqueraded as Reason in the English eighteenth century.

Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
Like culprits to the bar,¹

he delivers his rhadamanthine verdicts, strangely ignoring, in the belief that he has found moral certainty, one of the few things in morals that *are* certain, namely, that justice should be tempered with mercy. He proposed to treat his fellows 'exactly as they deserved' (i. 128), to which the only rejoinder can be that of Hamlet. It must always seem strange that a man so nobly interested in morality should have remained to all appearances quite unaffected by the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Hazlitt's essay ends with a picture of Godwin discussing with his friends the topic of love. Had Mary Wollstonecraft not died, Godwin might have learnt much she could have taught him. But what would have happened in that case is one of the 'If's of history.

A. R. HUMPHREYS

Private Letters of the Seventeenth Century. By Sir WALTER SCOTT, Bart. With an Introduction by DOUGLAS GRANT. Pp. 110. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947. 7s. 6d. net.

This is not the first printing of the *Private Letters*, but since Andrew Lang's publication of them in *Scribner's Magazine* of 1893 was incomplete and inaccurate, and Mr. W. M. Parker's addition of one of Lady Louisa Stuart's contributions (*M.L.R.*, Oct. 1939) is equally inaccessible except in large libraries, it is in effect the first which the general reader can enjoy. And how Scott must have enjoyed writing it! Fragment though it is, it is fuller of character and action than *The Fortunes of Nigel* of which, in a very inexact sense, it is the source. As Mr. Grant points out, the scene of the brawl in the Ordinary in Letter X is 'an alert, exciting description', livelier than the farcical duel outside the Ordinary in *The Fortunes of Nigel*; the atmosphere of Court intrigue and corruption is better conveyed through the hints of the *Letters* than through the direct statements of the novel; Sir Thomas is a credible and in some ways not unlikeable ne'er-do-well instead of a melodramatic villain; and the portrait of James I is both

¹ Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, xi. 294.

'more comic and more compelling', especially in Letter VIII. Admirable, also, is the supposed editor, bland, snarling, and blackmailing.

A delectable volume is completed by Mr. Grant's Introduction, which sets forth the history of the composition of the *Private Letters*, and by his final note on the Text. There seems to be a misprint on p. 64, ll. 8-9, where 'oute of haste' should probably be 'oute of harte'.

EDITH C. BATHO

English Institute Essays 1946. Edited by JAMES L. CLIFFORD, RUDOLF KIRK, and DAVID ALLAN ROBERTSON, Jr. Pp. x+222. New York: Columbia University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947. \$2.50; 14s. net.

The essays in this book fall into two groups of four: the first group entitled 'The Critical Significance of Biographical Evidence', the second 'The Methods of Literary Studies'.

In introducing the first group Mr. G. E. Bentley explains that it was hoped these four papers might help 'clarify somewhat our ideas of the use and abuse of biographical evidence'. The saving 'somewhat' was necessary: for it could hardly be expected that four separate authors working on particular problems related only by a theme in itself very general could do more than, to borrow a metaphor from Mr. Douglas Bush's paper on Milton, wipe some of the spots from our spectacles.

Mr. Bush may indeed be thought to have succeeded best in relating his particular subject to the general theme. He does not, in glancing at the treatment Milton has received from Dr. Johnson, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and M. Saurat, content himself with indicating abuses of biographical evidence sufficiently glaring to justify his sub-acid suggestion that the biographies of the critics might also be relevant; he goes on to say that biographical evidence 'can and should be useful in recreating the circumstances of composition, in promoting a receptive attitude, and perhaps now and then in throwing light on the text'. This is a positive conclusion, if trite. It is reinforced by Mr. Landa, whose subject—Jonathan Swift—has also suffered from the abuse of biographical evidence. Mr. Landa indicates some of the ways in which this has come about and goes on to consider how far appreciation of Swift as divine and as a public-spirited Irishman might affect our understanding of him. Mr. Carlos Baker approaches his subject—rather more extensive than his title, 'Shelley's Ferrarse Maniac'—from a different angle and, after closely examining 'Julian and Maddalo' and showing that poem to be a compound of autobiographical fact, historical fact, and fiction, satisfactorily demonstrates his contention—again one that it would be surprising to find denied—that careless use of biographical evidence can falsify our ideas of a writer's work as well as of himself. Miss Marion Witt, on the other hand, seeks in 'William Butler Yeats' to prove that, without a knowledge of the history of Yeats's thought and feeling, his reader must be a stranger to the world of his ideas.

The second group of essays brings equal energy and the same faint trace of innocent chivalry to the cause of common sense; though, in this country where one King Charles's head has perhaps sufficed, it might be thought that the

solipsisms of theory which these authors by implication decry are a less present danger and common sense proportionately less in need of defending. The group opens with 'Six Types of Literary History' by Mr. René Welleck, an analysis of the main ideas behind 'literary history'. Mr. Welleck concludes that there is no conflict between the literary history which recognizes that 'there is one poetry, one literature, comparable in all ages, developing, changing, full of possibilities' and literary criticism. In this Mr. Cleanth Brooks's 'Literary Criticism' supports him by way of a detailed study of Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'. The more specialized approaches are represented by Mr. Alan S. Downer, who emerges from a consideration of stage and acting history with the conclusion that 'by coming at a knowledge of the theatrical conventions of the time we may come at a surer estimate of a playwright's work', and by Mr. E. L. McAdam whose more slender 'The Textual Approach to Meaning' gives a glimpse of the relation of the textual critic to literary studies in general.

D. M. DAVIN

SHORT NOTICES

Romantic Love and Parental Authority in Sydney's *Arcadia*. By KENNETH THORPE ROWE. Pp. 58 (The University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology, no. 4). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1947. \$1.00.

'Romantic love' is perhaps an ambiguous phrase, which might cover situations very different in nature—and very differently appreciated by Sidney and many others. But it soon becomes clear that it is used here to suggest not any excess or irregularity of passion but the normal, spontaneous preferences of young people in matters of love and marriage. This painstaking analysis argues, convincingly enough, that Sidney, even in his revised *Arcadia*, allows to such free inclination rather more scope than has been admitted by some critics (e.g. Dr. Brie in 1918), though in the end the conflict between the traditionally approved authority of fathers and the growing reluctance of children 'to choose love by another's eyes' is left unresolved. It is shown that this reflects the kind of perplexities, not unknown, to be sure, in other days, which are to be observed both in theoretical discussions and in actual cases of the period. The paper should be read in conjunction with the corresponding chapters in Louis B. Wright, *Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England*, and another article by Mr. Rowe on 'Elizabethan Morality and the Folio Revisions of Sidney's *Arcadia*' in *Modern Philology* (vol. xxxvii, 1939). It will help to illustrate an interesting point in the history of moral ideas.

A. KOSZUL

Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse. By H. SWEET. Tenth Edition, revised throughout by C. T. ONIONS. Pp. viii+312. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946. 10s. 6d. net.

This tenth edition of Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader* appears just seventy years after the first and twenty-four years after the ninth edition. The revision has been unobtrusive but thorough. The general plan of the book is unchanged, but there are so many minor improvements that many readers who already possess the ninth edition will wish to have the new edition too. The greatest merit of Sweet's *Reader* has always been in the selection of texts; the present edition makes a few changes in this respect, all of them improvements. The old third extract, taken from the *Pastoral Care*, has been dropped, and new extracts from the translation of Boethius, Bede's account of the Coming of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, and the epilogue of Cynewulf's *Elene* have been added. In the dialectal section some

of the *Vespasian Hymns* have been omitted and the Latin text has been added to those which have been kept. The extract from the Lindisfarne Gospels has been lengthened, and a Suffolk charter has been added. The appearance of the page has been improved by omitting all diacritical signs except the macron and by no longer using italics to mark alliteration in poetry. There have been some new readings in the text, notably in the Leiden Riddle, and in v. 300 of *The Battle of Maldon*, where *Wigelmes bearn* is a great improvement on *Wigelines bearn* of the older editions. The bibliographical information at the head of each extract has been brought up to date. The notes are fuller than they were in earlier editions. Modern English translations of the early Northumbrian poems are included, and there are variant versions, both in Old English and Latin, such as the Leningrad MS. version of Cædmon's Hymn and Aldhelm's riddle *De Lorica*. In the Glossary there are improvements, such as the use of clearer type for the head-words and the replacement of the spelling *æ* by *e*. Cross-references, etymologies, and cognate words have been added more freely, and different meanings have been given to a few words, such as *lêw* and *fūdeisc*. One word which might have been glossed differently is *pearflēas*, xiv. 94, which is glossed 'in vain'. The meaning 'needlessly' would suit both context and etymology better.

The only serious fault that can be found with the new edition is the lack of an introduction. Sweet's (1894) had begun to date, but might have been replaced by an essay similar in scope to the introduction to Gordon's *An Introduction to Old Norse* or the essay on 'The English Language in the Fourteenth Century' in Sisam's *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*. Some account of Old English metre and a brief synopsis of Old English accidence might well have been included as an appendix. A minor improvement would be the provision of a map to illustrate the voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan.

G. L. BROOK

The Poetry of Thomas Hardy. By JAMES G. SOUTHWORTH. Pp. xii+250.

New York: Columbia University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1947. \$3.00; 16s. net.

This book is an elaborate and rather pretentious study of the themes, language, imagery, prosody, and 'architectonics' of Hardy's poetry. In the concluding section the author writes briefly on *The Dynasts* and attempts a general 'evaluation' of Hardy's poetic achievement. The most useful part of the work is the careful analysis of the diction of the poems in the sixth chapter. Unfortunately Professor Southworth's style is extremely unattractive and, in some places, painfully clumsy and slipshod. The quality of his critical judgement can, perhaps, be fairly represented by his final 'evaluation', in which, although he recognizes certain elements of greatness in Hardy's poetry, he places him 'on the slopes of Parnassus rather than at the top', because he was not an 'idealist'. 'The reader', we are told, 'never moves steadily forward with the poet sensing that he is being led upward'... 'he [Hardy] moved in the wrong direction. He should have struggled upward'... 'he was not convinced that the world was progressing'.

V. DE S. PINTO

Handel's Messiah. A Touchstone of Taste. By ROBERT MANSON MYERS.

Pp. xxii+338. New York and London: Macmillan, 1948. \$5.00; 25s. net.

Mr. Myers has told his readers all that they could reasonably want to know about the composition, original reception, and subsequent reputation of Handel's *Messiah*. We are informed about such matters as the opposition to the performance of oratorios in churches, the increase in size of the chorus, the prices paid for tickets, charitable performances, and the effect upon audiences in Church-Langton, Leicestershire, in 1759 and in Lindsborg, Kansas, to-day. But Mr. Myers disappoints expectations aroused by his sub-title. He does not take us far in his analyses of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century musical criticism, and makes little attempt to relate these to contemporary criticism in the other arts. The book will be valued as a repository of information by those who are prepared to overlook the rococo ornament with which Mr. Myers decorates a plain statement, but readers will regretfully admit that an opportunity has been missed.

J. B.

SUMMARY OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

By KATHLEEN TILLOTSON

DURHAM UNIVERSITY JOURNAL

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The date of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Cupid's Revenge* (James E. Savage), pp. 286-94.

Milton's approach to the story of the Fall (Ward S. Worden), pp. 295-305.

Irish myth and the plot of *Ulysses* (Howard Emerson Rogers), pp. 306-27.

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[*Chyvachie*, l. 85.]

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The classical lamentations in the *Nun's Priest's Tale* (Robert Armstrong Pratt), pp. 76-8.

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[Two emendations.]

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['Petrarch' for 'Pindar' in Sonnet 3.]

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Blake's 'sons of Albion' (H. M. Margoliouth), pp. 94-5.

Plagiarism or parallelism (D. B. Gregor), pp. 95-6.

[In *Manfred*; see *N. & Q.*, vol. 191, no. 1, p. 24.]

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[Biographical queries.]

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[Correction of transcription in *Henry James and R. L. Stevenson*.]

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The critical approach to *Lavengro-Romany Rye* (John E. Tilford, Jr.), pp. 79-96.

[Novel or autobiography?]

